Bamboo Comics

三国志

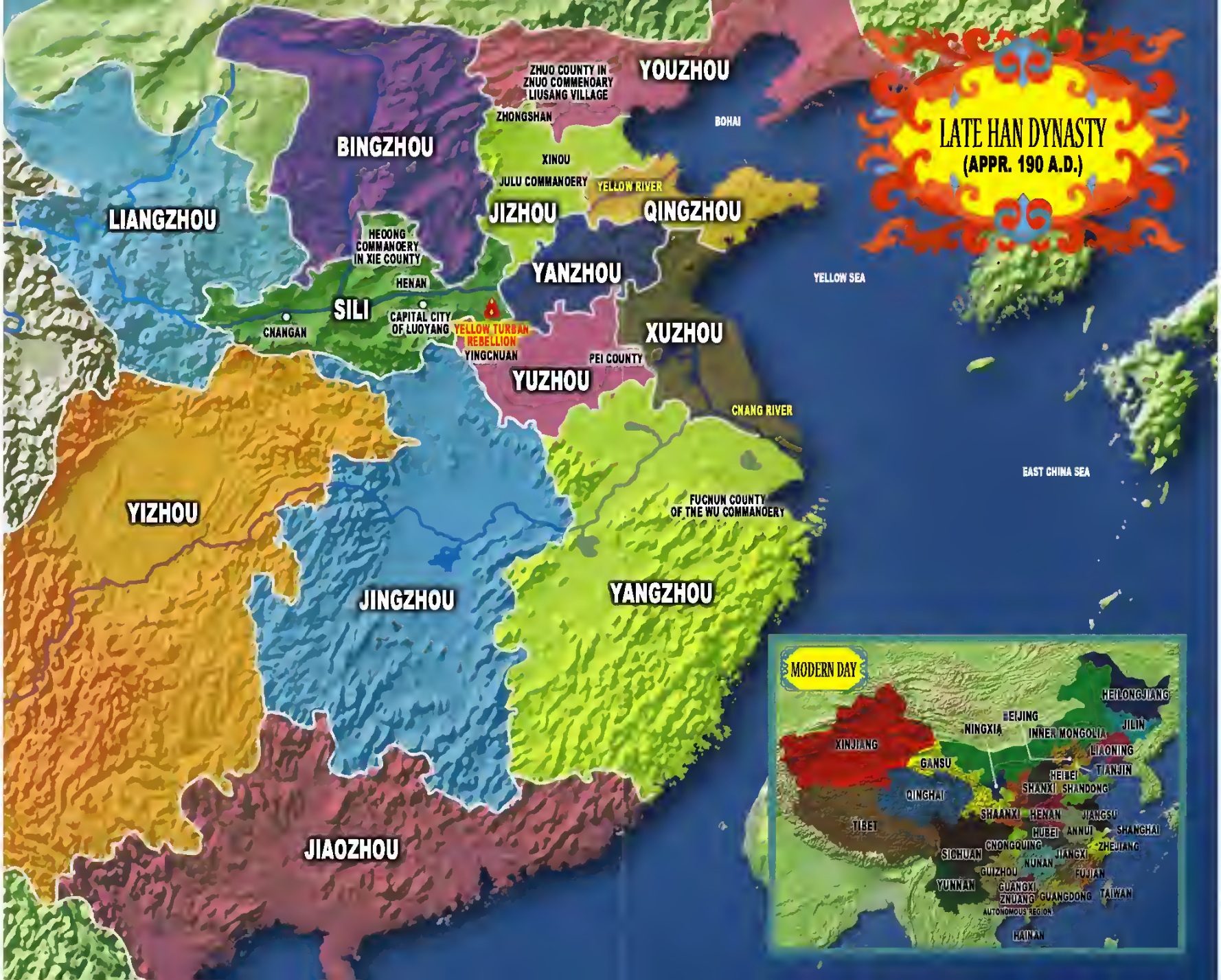
一

原作 北方謙三 Kitakata Kenzo

作画 河承男 Ha Seung Nam

【英雄の登場】

竹書房


LATE HAN DYNASTY
(APPR. 190 A.D.)
YOUZHOU
ZHUO COUNTY IN ZNUO COMMENOARY LIUSANG VILLAGE
ZHONGSHAN
BOHAI
BINGZHOU
XINOU
JULU COMMANOERY
YELLOW RIVER
JIZHOU
QINGZHOU
LIANGZHOU
HEOONG COMMANOERY IN XIE COUNTY
HENAN
YANZHOU
YELLOW SEA
SILI
CHANGAN
CAPITAL CITY OF LUOYANG
YELLOW TURBAN REBELLION
YINGCHUAN
PEI COUNTY
XUZHOU
YUZHOU
CHANG RIVER
EAST CHINA SEA
YIZHOU
FUCHUN COUNTY OF THE WU COMMANOERY
JINGZHOU
YANGZHOU
JIAOZHOU
MODERN DAY
HEILONGJIANG
BEIJING
NINGXIA
INNER MONGOLIA
JILIN
XINJIANG
LIAONING
GANSU
TIANJIN
HEIBEI
SHANXI
SHANDONG
QINGHAI
SHAANXI
HENAN
JIANGSU
TIBET
HUBEI
ANHUI
SHANGHAI
CHONGQUING
ZHEJIANG
SICHUAN
JIANGXI
NUNAN
FUJIAN
GUIZHOU
YUNNAN
GUANGXI ZHUANG AUTONOMOUS REGION
GUANGDONG
TAIWAN
HAINAN

RECORDS OF THE THREE KINGDOMS

1

Kitakata Kenzo
北方謙三
Ha Seung Nam
河承男

TAKESHOBO

RECORDS OF THE THREE KINGDOMS

CAST OF CHARACTERS

1

CAO CAO

Style name: Mengde. Born 155, died 220. Hails from Xiao County, Pei, Yuzhou. Descending from eunuchs, he took a post in the Imperial Court at the age of twenty and was successful as an able official. He became Luoyang's Captain of the Cavalry and was twenty-nine when he was sent to supress the Yellow Turban rebels in Yingchuan. This was the starting point for an age of great turbulence. It was also at this time that he met Liu Bei and Sun Jian.

XIAHOU YUAN

Style name: Miaocai. Date of birth unknown, died in 219. Hails from Xiao County, Pei, Yuzhou. Xiahou Dun was his cousin. He served as an officer under Cao Cao from the time that he became Captain of the Cavalry.

ZHU JUN

Style name: Wentai. Born 155, died 192. Hails from Fuchun, Wu Commandery, Yangzhou. Father of Sun Ce and Sun Quan, his military successes at quelling the Yellow Turban Rebellion made him governor of Changsha and provincial governor of Yuzhou.

SUN JIAN

Style name: Gongwei. Date of birth unknown, died in 195. Hails from Shangyu County, Kuaiji Commandery, Yangzhou. During the suppression of the Yellow Turban Rebellion, he was appointed as imperial commander, along with Huangfu Song, partaking in various battles to subjugate the insurgance. He also summoned forth Sun Jian, who comes from the same Yangzhou region.

LIU BEI

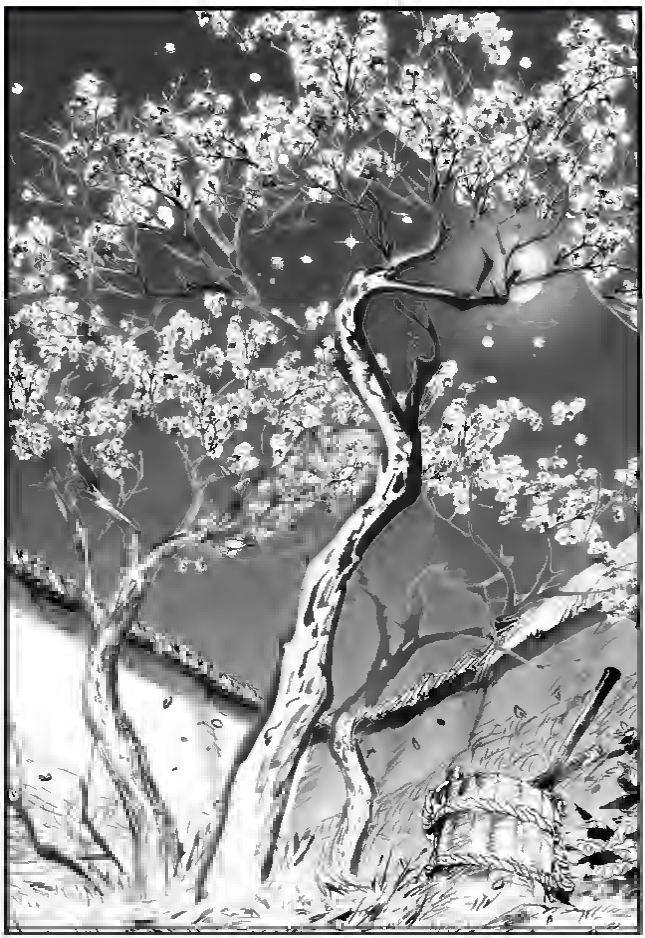
Style name: Xuande. Born 161, died 223. Hails from Liusang Village in Zhuo County, Zhuo Commandery, Youzhou. A descendant of Liu Sheng, Prince Jing of Zhongshan (son of the former Han emperor, Emperor Jing). He was raised by his straw mat weaving mother and despite all his trials and tribulations, maintained a firm grasp on his aspirations. He became a volunteer soldier to supress the Yellow Turban Rebellion along with Guan Yu and Zhang Fei.

ZHANG FEI

Style name: Yide. Date of birth unknown, died in 221. Hails from Zhuo County, Zhuo Commandery, Youzhou. In the trio of brothers consisting of himself, Liu Bei and Guan Yu, he acts as the littlest brother. Dauntless and daring, of the characters in the Records of the Three Kingdoms, ha stands above even Guan Yu, Zhao Yun, and Lü Bu as a general.

GUAN YU

Style name: Yunchang. Date of birth unknown, died in 219. Hails from Xie County, Hedong Commandery, Sizhou. In the trio of brothers consisting of himself, Liu Bei and Zhang Fei, he acts as the second oldest brother. He is sturdily built and fights with the Green Dragon Crescent Blade. He's a heroic man said to be equal to 10,000 soldiers on his own.



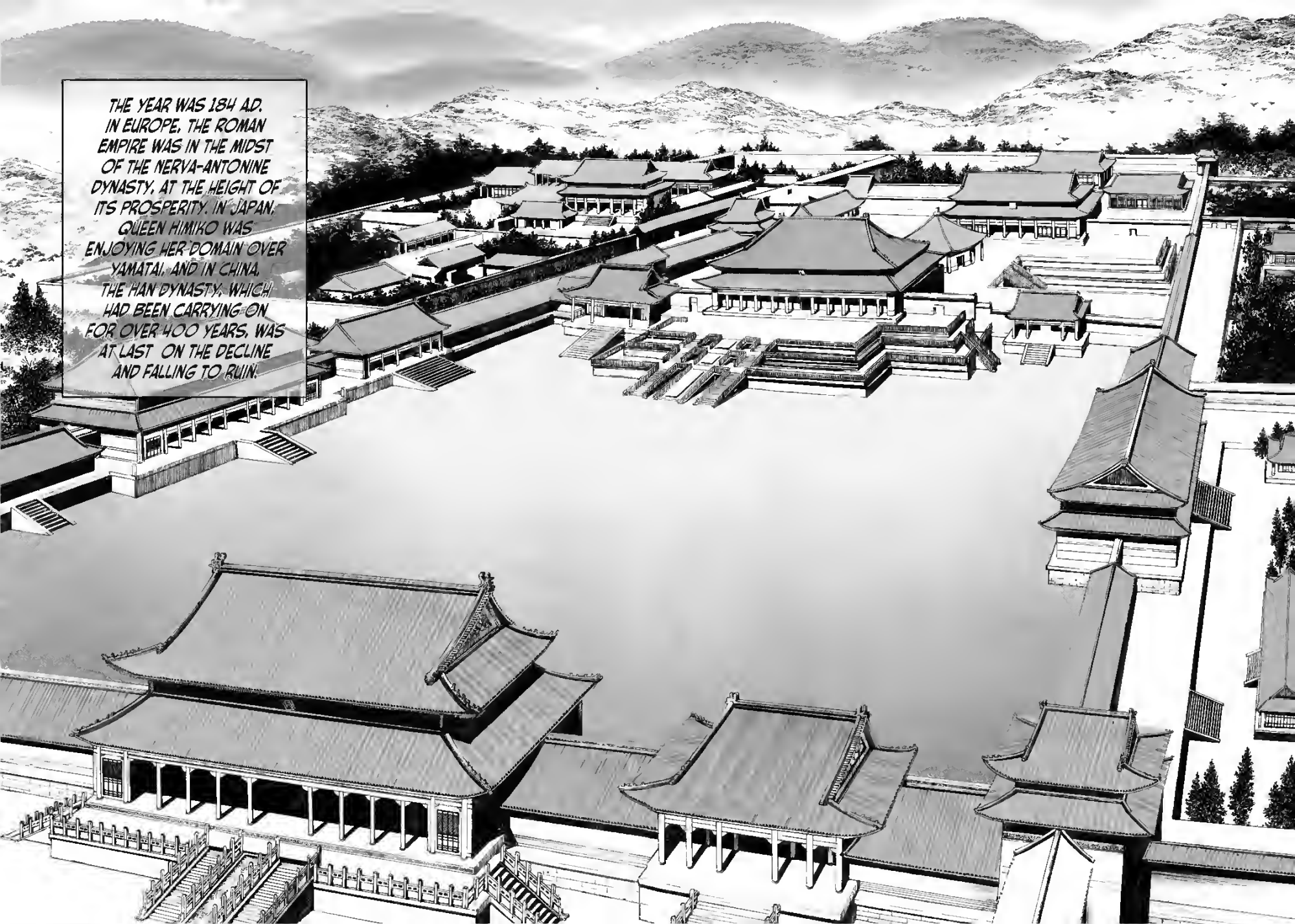
RECORDS OF THE THREE KING-DOMS

WRITTEN BY: KENZO KITAKATA
ILLUSTRATED BY: HA SEUNG NAM

1

ENTER THE HERO

TAKESHOBO


THE YEAR WAS 184 AD. IN EUROPE, THE ROMAN EMPIRE WAS IN THE MIDST OF THE NERVA-ANTONINE DYNASTY, AT THE HEIGHT OF ITS PROSPERITY. IN JAPAN, QUEEN HIMIKO WAS ENJOYING HER DOMAIN OVER YAMATAI. AND IN CHINA, THE HAN DYNASTY, WHICH HAD BEEN CARRYING ON FOR OVER 400 YEARS, WAS AT LAST ON THE DECLINE AND FALLING TO RUIN.

DURING THIS TIME, WIDESPREAD DROUGHT AND FAMINE WAS WRACKING THE COUNTRY OF CHINA.

EVEN IN THE NEIGHBORING VICINITIES OF THE CAPITAL CITY OF LUOYANG, TRAGIC EVENTS LIKE CANNABALISM AND THE OLD AND WEAK ALIKE BEING THROWN TO THE CURB WERE RAMPANT.
HOWEVER!

INSIDE THE IMPERIAL COURT THAT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE UPHOLDING THE COUNTRY AND PROVIDING AID...
...THE EMPEROR WAS A MERE TWELVE YEARS OF AGE AND COMPLETELY WITHOUT ANY REAL POWER. THE RELATIVES ON THE YOUNG EMPEROR'S MOTHER'S SIDE AND THE ARISTOCRACY AND EUNUCHS THAT WORKED IN THE COURT SPENT ALL THEIR TIME IN POWER STRUGGLES, OFFERING ABSOLUTELY NO COURSE OF ACTION!

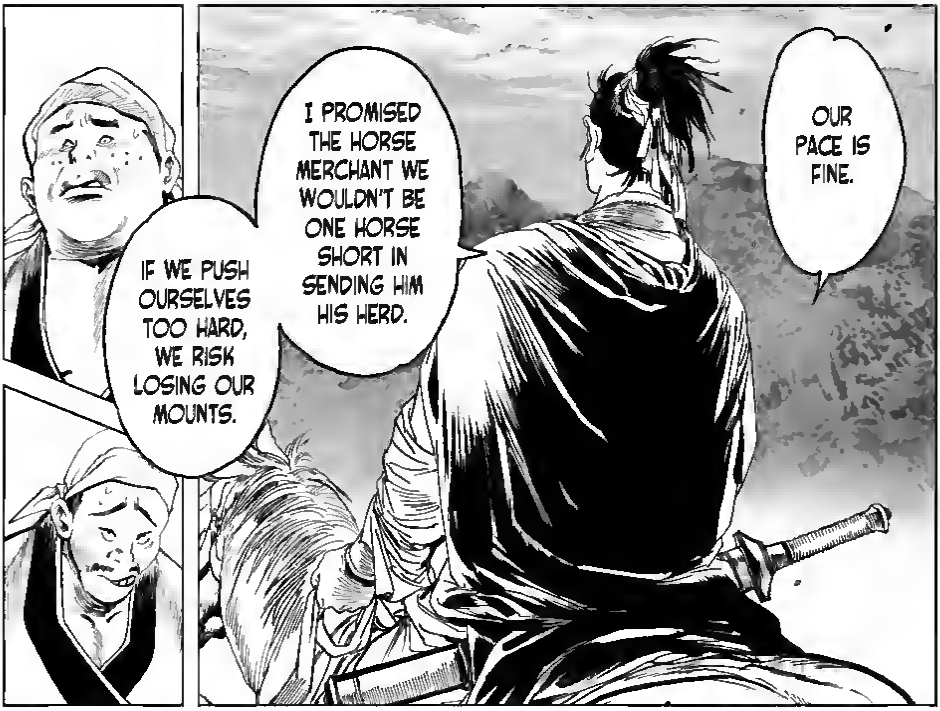
AMONG THEM, THERE WERE EVEN EUNUCHS WHO CAN BE BLAMED WITH THE FALL OF THE HAN DYNASTY, FOR MONOPOLIZING THE COURT IN THEIR HIGH-HANDED WAY.
THE EUNUCHS WERE A STERILE GROUP OF MEN ALLOWED INTO THE INNER PALACE ONLY AFTER THEY HAD BEEN CASTRATED, OUT OF THE JEALOUS EMPERORS' CONCERN THAT THEY WOULD TRY TO MINGLE WITH HIS PRIZED CONCUBINES.

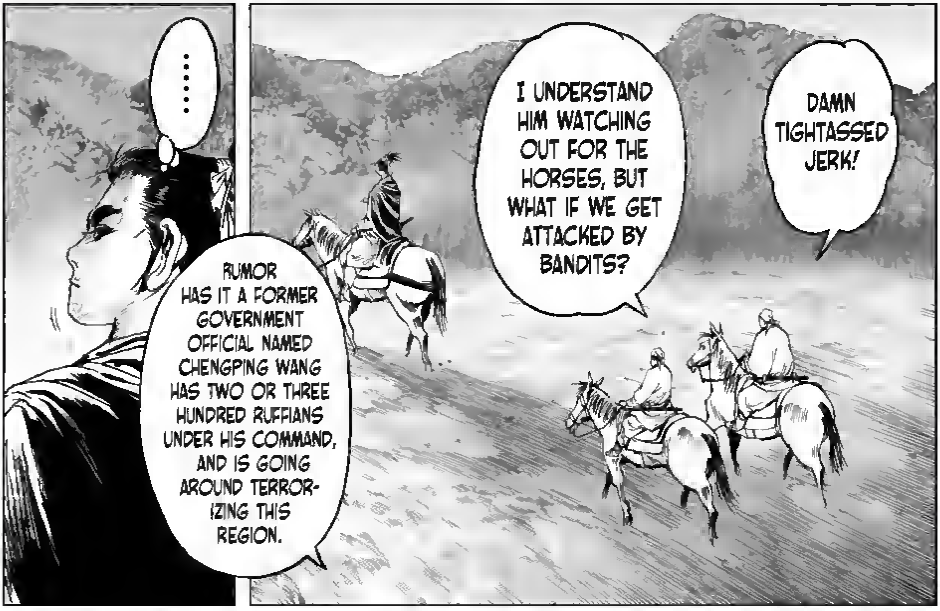
WITHOUT THEIR SEX ORGANS, THE MEN TURNED THEIR LUST TOWARD FOOD, WEALTH, AND POWER. BUT THE WORST OUTCOME WAS THEIR SHARED SENSE OF VICTIMHOOD THAT BONDED THEM TOGETHER CLOSER THAN PARENTS OR SIBLINGS.
IN THAT WAY, IT WAS NO PROBLEM FOR THEM TO MAKE PUPPETS OUT OF THE EMPERORS ON INTO ADULTHOOD.

WITH THAT BEING SAID, THEY HAD A DEFINITE HAND IN THE FALL OF THE HAN DYNASTY. BUT THE FATAL BLOW WAS A REVOLT SPURRED ON BY A NEW RELIGION CALLED THE YELLOW TURBAN REBELLION!

THE YELLOW TURBAN REBELLION WAS MADE UP OF WAY OF SUPREME PEACE BELIEVERS AND LED BY ZHANG JUE WHO HAILED FROM JULU COMMANDERY (PRESENT DAY HEBEI) AND PROCLAIMED HIMSELF "GENERAL OF HEAVEN".
THEY WERE DESTITUTE PEASANTS AND FARMERS FROM EVERY REGION AND WHILE SHOUTING THEIR CHANT, "THE FIRMAMENT HAS PERISHED, THE YELLOW SKY WILL SOON RISE!", THEY SURGED LIKE A WAVE TOWARD THE CAPITAL CITY OF LUOYANG, SYMBOL OF THE HAN DYNASTY.
THEIR NUMBERS WERE IN THE HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS!

WHEN THE CURTAIN WAS RISING ON THE THREE KINGDOMS.
THAT BRINGS US TO OUR STORY.
THUD THUD THUD THUD
ドドドド…
…
YEAH.
I'VE BEEN MEANING TO SAY THIS FOR A WHILE NOW, BUT WHY DON'T WE PICK UP THE PACE?
AT THIS RATE, THE ANTS ARE OUT-CRAWLING US.
WE WERE KIDDING OURSELVES WHEN WE SAID WE COULD MAKE IT TO XIN DU IN TWO DAYS AT THIS SPEED.


OUR PACE IS FINE.
I PROMISED THE HORSE MERCHANT WE WOULDN'T BE ONE HORSE SHORT IN SENDING HIM HIS HERD.
IF WE PUSH OURSELVES TOO HARD, WE RISK LOSING OUR MOUNTS.


DAMN TIGHTASSED JERK!
I UNDERSTAND HIM WATCHING OUT FOR THE HORSES, BUT WHAT IF WE GET ATTACKED BY BANDITS?
.....
RUMOR HAS IT A FORMER GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL NAMED CHENGPING WANG HAS TWO OR THREE HUNDRED RUFFIANS UNDER HIS COMMAND, AND IS GOING AROUND TERRORIZING THIS REGION.

WE'LL STILL PROTECT THEM!
EVEN IF A THOUSAND BANDITS COME AT US, WE WILL PROTECT THE HORSES.

YOU REALLY THINK TWENTY OF US COULD WIN AGAINST WANG'S GANG?
ARE YOU CRAZY?
HA HA HA HA! WITH AS FEW OF US AS THERE ARE?
IF WE CAN'T WIN, THEN LET THEM KILL US.
TCH! I CAN'T TAKE THIS ANYMORE!
AND A COMPLIMENT LIKE THAT MEANS EVERYTHING TO ME.
AT LEAST IF WE DIE FIGHTING TO KEEP OUR PROMISE, THE HORSE MERCHANT WILL CONSIDER US MEN WHO REMAINED FAITHFUL TO THE VERY END.

WHAT'S ALL THAT TALK ABOUT BEING FAITHFUL WHEN WE'RE GETTING PAID NEXT TO NOTHING FOR THIS TRANSPORT?
I DON'T FOLLOW THIS NUTCASE!
WE'RE HORSE DRIVERS WE DON'T KNOW THE FIRST THING ABOUT WIELDING A SWORD.
Y-YOU'VE GOT A POINT. IF WE'RE ATTACKED BY THOSE MARAUDERS, WE DON'T STAND A CHANCE.
.....
.....

TRUD TRUD TRUD TRUD
ドドドド…
HONG JI, WHAT IS IT?!
!

LOOK OVER THERE!
M-MASTER LIU BEI!
BUT IT'S ONLY THREE HORSEMEN!
THEY CAN'T SERIOUSLY MEAN TO ATTACK US WITH SO FEW!
I-IT'S CHENG-PING WANG!
!

I'M OUTTA HERE! NO WAY I'M DYING AT THE HANDS OF SOME BANDITS!
SHIT! WHAT DID I TELL YOU?!
COWARDS! HOW DARE YOU TURN TAIL!!

THAT'S ENOUGH WE HAVE NO NEED FOR YELLOW-BELLIES ANYWAY.
BUT MASTER LIU BEI!
FORGET THEM, HONG JI!
PRE-CISELY!
WE CAN'T FIGHT THEM JUST THE TWO OF US, MASTER LIU BEI!
THEN WHAT DO YOU PROPOSE WE DO?
SWISH

WHO'S WITH ME?!
I HAVE A PLAN FOR DEFEATING THEM!
WE ARE!

I ONLY JUST MET YOU THROUGH THE HORSE TRADER AT ZHONGSHAN MARKET PLACE, BUT YOU SAY YOU WILL FIGHT ALONG-SIDE ME?
YOU HAVE MY THANKS.
WE'LL HELP YOU OUT HOWEVER WE CAN!
THAT'S RIGHT! WE WERE MOVED BY WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT FAITHFULNESS EARLIER!

VERY WELL. YOU TWO JUST FOLLOW MY COMMANDS!
THEY MAY OUTNUMBER US, BUT THEY'RE STILL JUST A DISORDERLY MOB OF BANDITS.
IF WE CAN BRING DOWN THEIR LEADER, THEN VICTORY IS OURS!
HONG JI!
RALLY ALL THE MARES TO THE FRONT OF THE HERD AND SEND THEM CHARGING AT THE BANDITS!
THE MALE HORSES WILL ALWAYS FOLLOW THE MARES. THEY'LL BECOME TOO POWERFUL A FORCE FOR THE BANDITS TO RECKON WITH, AND SHOULD BREAK UP THEIR FORMATION. ONCE THEY'VE DISPERSED, I'LL CUT THROUGH TO TAKE DOWN CHENGPING WANG MYSELF!
SO...
...TELL US ABOUT THIS PLAN OF YOURS.

YES, MASTER LIU BEI.
LEAVE IT TO ME!
THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD

WE'LL DIE IF WE LET THAT STAMPEDE OVERTAKE US!
RETREAT!
THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD

YOU ROTTEN GANG OF BANDITS THOUGHT YOU COULD GET THE BETTER OF ME?!
I AM LIU BEI XUANDE, DESCENDENT OF PRINCE JING OF ZHONGSHAN!

SLASH!
SLASH!
SLASH!
BOWMEN!
RUN THIS MAN THROUGH!
SLICE
SLICE

TWANANG
MASTER LIU BEI, LOOK OUT!

CHENGPING WANG, WE MEET AT LAST!
ドドドドド...
THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD
CURSES!

IMPUDENT BRAT!
UWOAAAAAH!!

CLING

!
GRAB
CLENCH
UUUH...

KUUH!

WAHAH!

DIDN'T KNOW YOU HAD IT IN YOU.
IMPRESSIVE WORK, GENERAL.
HUFF!
HUFF!
THOUGH I WASN'T TOO FAR BEHIND YOU MYSELF.

YOU DON'T MOCK A MAN WHO JUST RISKED HIS LIFE IN A FIGHT!
KNOCK IT OFF, ZHANG FEI!
THIS FOUL-MOUTHED MAN IS ZHANG FEI YIDE. A PLEASURE MAKING YOUR ACQUAINTANCE.
FORGIVE ME FOR NOT INTRODUCING MYSELF SOONER. I AM GUAN YU YUNCHANG
.....

LORD LIU BEI XUANDE, IS IT? A FINE NAME WITH A GOOD RING TO IT.
I AM LIU BEI FROM ZHUO COUNTY (PRESENT DAY ZHUOZHOU, HEBEI). MY STYLE NAME IS XUANDE.
THE PLEASURE'S ALL MINE.
PLEASE DON'T CALL ME "LORD".
WE'RE COMRADES, ARE WE NOT?
MY FAMILY'S TRADE IS IN STRAW MAT WEAVING.
WHAT DO YOU DO IN ZHUO COUNTY? JUDGING BY WHAT I JUST SAW, YOU DON'T LOOK LIKE YOUR REGULAR HORSE DRIVER OR FARMER.
HA HA HA HA! WELL SAID! THEN I TRUST YOU WILL PERMIT ME TO ASK YOU A QUESTION.

THEN ALL THAT STUFF YOU SAID ABOUT PRINCE JING OF ZHONGSHAN WAS A LIE!
I TRANSPORT THE WOVEN MATS TO BE SOLD ON FOOT.
WEAVING ?
.....
MASTER LIU BEI, PARDON ME FOR INTERRUPTING, BUT IF WE DON'T HURRY UP IT WILL BE DARK SOON!
IF I TRACE MY FAMILY TREE BACK FAR ENOUGH, I'M RELATED BY BLOOD TO LIU SHENG. IT SOUNDS SO HAUGHTY TO BRING UP, SO I USUALLY HIDE IT. BUT I WAS SO CAUGHT UP IN THE HEAT OF THE MOMENT, I COULDN'T HELP MYSELF...
ACTUALLY, NO. IT'S THE TRUTH.

BEFORE THE SUN SETS, LET US COVER THIRTY LI (APPR. 12 KM).
WE'D BETTER HURRY ON TO XIN DU.
GOOD. LET'S MOVE OUT, MEN!
THEY HID THEMSELVES DURING THE BATTLE, BUT ARE ALL ACCOUNTED FOR.
HONG JI, HOW DID THE HORSES DO?
THOSE MEN RODE BACK, BUT...
W-WELL, ACTUALLY
WHAT'S THE HOLD UP, HONG JI?
.....

HA HA... SO YOU CAME BACK, DID YOU?
GOOD. WE'LL ALL RIDE ON TO XIN DU TOGETHER. MEN CAN'T HELP BUT HAVE A CHANGE OF HEART!
.....
NAH.
HOW ABOUT YOU TWO?
WILL YOU JOIN US?
ドドドド...
I SEE THEN. WELL, I HOPE TO MEET AGAIN SOMEDAY.
THIS IS AS FAR AS WE GO.
WE CAME WITH YOU IN SEARCH OF SOME ACTION, AND THAT SKIRMISH EARLIER WAS JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED.

!
THUD THUD THUD
ドドドド...
THAT'S RIGHT.
W-WHERE'RE YOU GOING, GUAN YU?!
YOU'RE GOING WITH HIM?
FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS...
...YOU AND I HAVE WANDERED EVERY TERRITORY IN SEARCH OF A TRUE "NOBLEMAN" TO SHARE OUR FATE WITH.
AND I THINK WE JUST FOUND HIM!

IS HE NUTS? HE MAY CLAIM TO BE A DESCENDENT OF PRINCE JING OF ZHONGSHAN, BUT IT'S NOT LIKE HE CAN PROVE IT! AND HE DOESN'T LOOK TO BE ANY OLDER THAN ME! I'M GETTING SICK OF YOUR HASTINESS!!
TCH!

THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD
F" F" F" F"...

GUAN YU, I'LL JUST HAVE TO EXPOSE THIS IMPOSTER MYSELF!
BUT IT'S NOT LIKE I GOT A CHOICE!

LIUSANG VILLAGE WHERE LIU BEI WAS BORN.
ZHUO COUNTY. IN ZHUO COMMANDERY
EVERYONE HERE'S LOOKING AT US FUNNY!
WHAT GIVES?!
BAR

IS IT SO WRONG TO ENJOY A DRINK PAID FOR WITH HONEST MONEY?!
ZHANG FEI, SETTLE DOWN.
YOU'VE BEEN DRINKING TOO MUCH.
GULP
ゴク
GULP
ゴク

IT'S MAKING WORKING AS A MERCENARY FOR THAT HORSE MERCHANT ZHANG SHIPING LOOK LIKE A LOT MORE FUN!
AND THAT LIU BEI JERK HASN'T MADE A SINGLE MOVE.
BUT IT'S BEEN A WHOLE MONTH SINCE WE GOT HERE.
YEAH, I KNOW.
HE TURNED HIM DOWN FLAT, TALKING ALL BIG AND SAYING "I DON'T FEEL LIKE IT RIGHT NOW"!
THAT'S RIGHT!
SIR LIU BEI TURNED DOWN ZHANG'S OFFER OF A THOUSAND MEN!
SURE THEY MIGHT JUST BE MERCENARIES WHO WATCH A MERCHANT'S GOODS, BUT HE COULDV'E BEEN COMMANDING OFFICER OF A THOUSAND MEN!
YOU THINK SO? I DON'T.

I WANT TO KNOW WHAT A MAN WHO TURNS DOWN COMMANDING ONE THOUSAND MEN IS THINKING.
THAT'S WHY I'M STILL HERE.

DO YOU LIKE IT? IT'S YOURS.

TCH!

THANK YOU!
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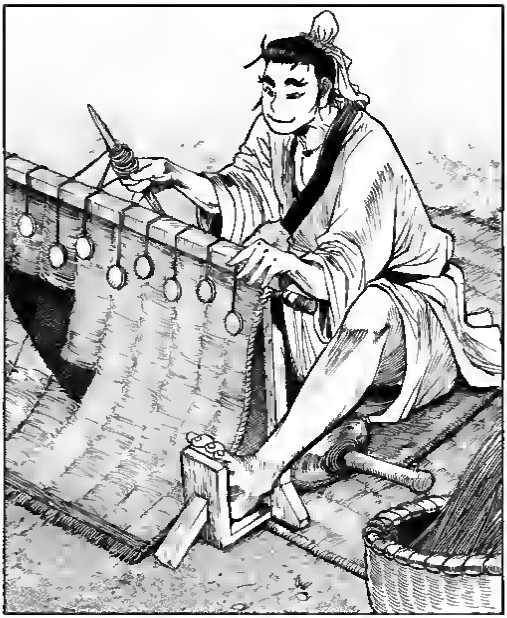


STOP SPYING, HONG JI. IT'S RUDE.

WANTED...?

TAKE THAT ZHANG FEI GUY!
THAT'S RIGHT!

BUT MASTER LIU BEI!
DO YOU KNOW WHO THOSE MEN REALLY ARE? THEY'RE WANTED!

HE COMES FROM YOUZHOU AND SERVED UNDER A FEUDAL LORD FAMILY CALLED THE HUNG FOR A TIME WHERE HE WAS EMPLOYED AS THE SUPERVISOR OF THE SOUTH GATE*! BUT...
GATEKEEPER

SWISH
SWISH

H... HELP HIM!
WHAT IS IT, UNCLE ?!
YIDE! YIDE!
MARAN HAD BROUGHT THE OFFICIALS UNDER QUESTION FOR MANIPULATING THE SCALES AND CHEATING WITH THE WEIGHTS!
HOW CAN THAT BE?! MARAN'S ALWAYS BEEN AN HONEST SALT MERCHANT.
YOUR COUSIN MARAN HAS BEEN SLAIN BY THE SALT OFFICIALS!
HELP HIM, YIDE.

YIDE, GO IN MY PLACE TO AVENGE HIM!
THAT'S RIGHT!
.....
YOU MEAN MARAN WAS KILLED FOR EXPOSING THE WRONGDOINGS OF THOSE OFFICIALS?!
I, ZHANG FEI YIDE, WILL CLEAR MARAN'S GOOD NAME!
YOU GOT IT, UNCLE!

THUD
THUD
THUD

SHWOOP

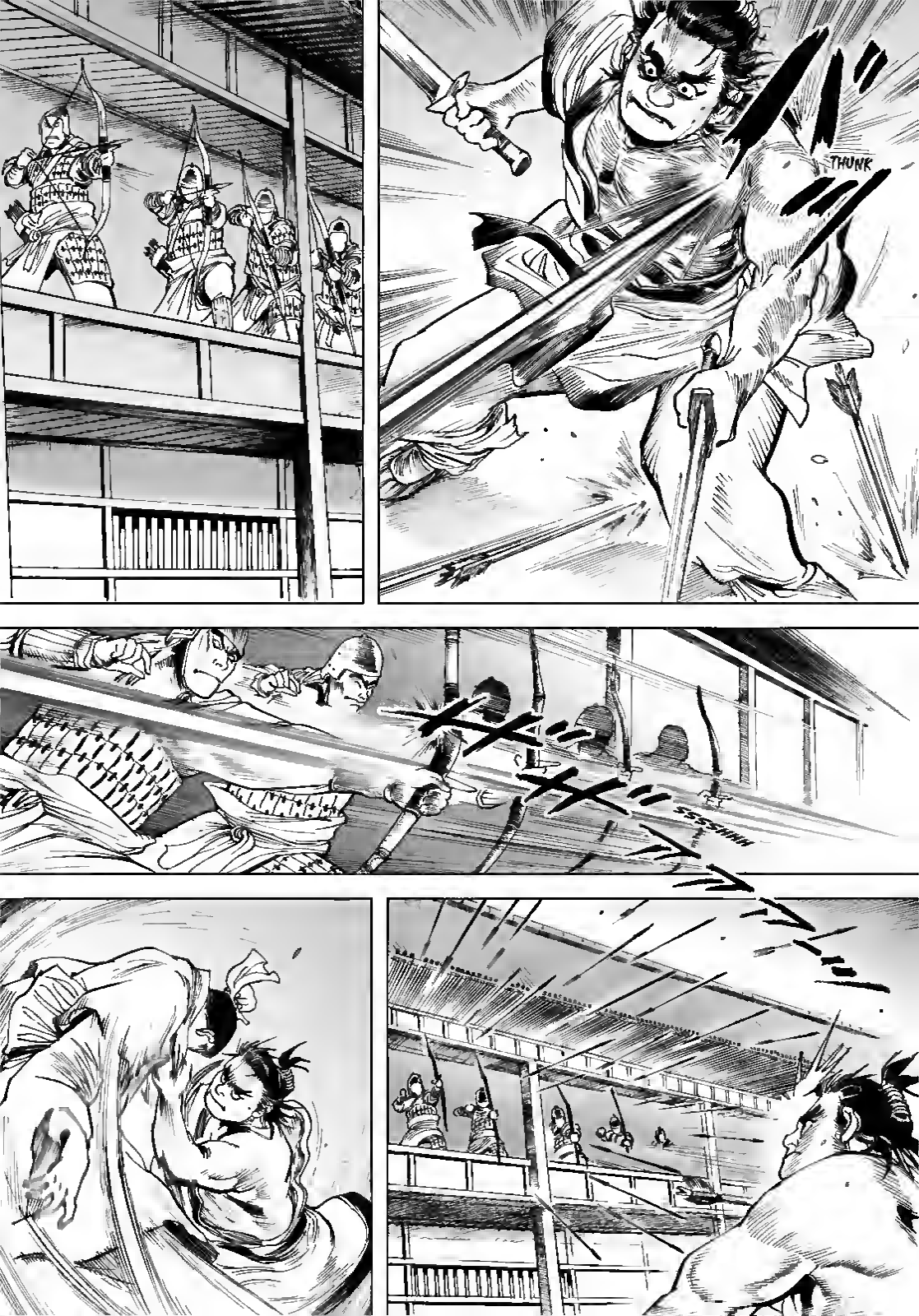
SLASH
SLICE

KRRSH

COME HERE AT ONCE AND DISPOSE OF THIS RUFFIAN!
GUARDS!

オオオオ…
OOOOOH!
HA HA HA HA! NOW IT'S GETTING INTERESTING!
I WAS JUST GETTING BORED OF CHOPPING UP ALL THESE WEAKLING PETTY OFFICIALS! COME AT ME, YOU LOUTS!
THUD
THUD

SLASH
SWISH
WHACK


THUNK
SSSHHH

THUNK
THUNK
THUNK
10
BUST

SHIT...
COME AND GET ME!!
AAARGH!!
THUD
THUD
CLENCH

AAARGH!!
IT'S NOT FAIR TO GATHER AN ARMY JUST TO TAKE DOWN ONE MAN!

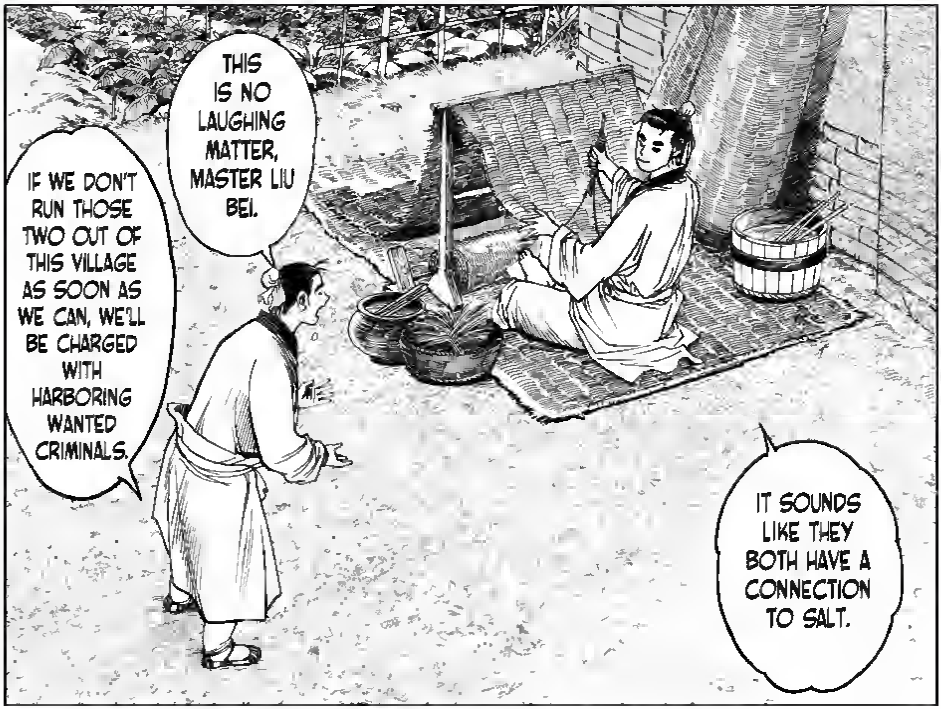
THUD
THUD
THUD

THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD

THWICK
BAM
BASH
KRICK
ZASH

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THAT, MASTER LIU BEI?

*(XIE COUNTY IN HEDONG COMMANDERY PRESENT DAY YUNCHENG CITY, SHANXI PROVINCE)


IF WE DON'T RUN THOSE TWO OUT OF THIS VILLAGE AS SOON AS WE CAN, WE'LL BE CHARGED WITH HARBORING WANTED CRIMINALS.
THIS IS NO LAUGHING MATTER, MASTER LIU BEI.
IT SOUNDS LIKE THEY BOTH HAVE A CONNECTION TO SALT.

THEY COMMISSIONED WEAPONS TO BE MADE BY MAO?!
WHAT ?!

IF THEY GO ON A RAMPAGE WITH WEAPONS LIKE THOSE, WHO KNOWS WHAT WILL BECOME OF THE VILLAGE...
BESIDES, THEY JUST COMMISSIONED THE BLACKSMITH MAO TO FORGE THEM A GIANT CRESCENT BLADE AND SNAKE LANCE.

THERE'S NOT A MOMENT TO LOSE, MASTER LIU BEI!
THAT'S RIGHT!
HONG JI.
I'M SORRY, BUT...
MASTER... LIU...

PLEASE ASK GUAN YU AND ZHANG FEI TO COME TO MY HOUSE TONIGHT.
Y-YOU MEAN YOU'VE FINALLY MADE UP YOUR MIND, MASTER LIU BEI?!

FINALLY PEACE WILL RETURN TO LIUSANG VILLAGE!
I'M ON IT!

THAT NIGHT, THE THREE HELD THEIR HISTORIC MEETING.

QUITE A FEW BOOKS YOU'VE GOT HERE
YOU REALLY READ ALL OF THEM?

STILL
FROM THE WAY YOU CARRIED YOURSELF IN BATTLE THE LAST TIME, IT SEEMED TO ME THAT YOU ARE QUITE CUT OUT FOR THE ART OF WAR.

OH, THAT.
I ONLY PULLED THAT OFF THROUGH SHEER FRENZY

I STUDIED UNDER THE TUTELAGE OF MASTER LU ZHI WHEN I WAS FIFTEEN YEARS OLD, BUT. .
—I SOON FOUND OUT I'M JUST NOT CUT OUT FOR ACADEMICS.

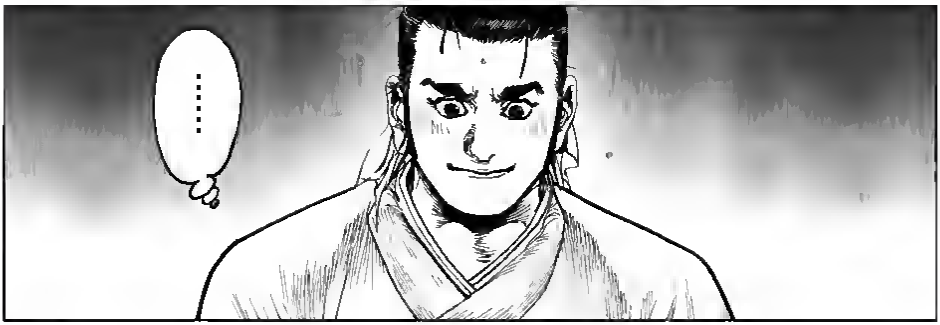
P-PLEASE.
AH, YOU'RE MODEST TOO.
PLANTING YOUR FOOT ON CHENGPING WANG'S BODY TO PULL OUT THE TWO SWORDS YOU'D STABBED HIM WITH WAS A DARING MOVE
WHAT ?!
THAT WAS MY FIRST TIME ACTUALLY STABBING SOMEBODY TOO.
I WAS JUST IN A PANIC.
YOU GOT ME.
YOU MEAN TO SAY THAT BATTLE WAS YOUR FIRST?!

I CAN TELL YOU NOW, I WAS DESPERATE.
THE ONLY THING GOING THROUGH MY HEAD AS I CHARGED THOSE BANDITS...
...WAS THAT IF I'M ONLY SO LUCKY AS TO DIE HERE, THEN I'LL HAVE TO GIVE UP ON MY PLANS FOR THIS COUNTRY. THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO FOR IT.
WELL, I'LL BE.
YOUR PLANS FOR THIS COUNTRY?
THAT'S RIGHT

I HOPE YOU WILL HEAR ME OUT WITHOUT LAUGHING, BUT...
I SECRETLY HARBOR AN ENORMOUS ASPIRATION TO SUBJUGATE THIS CHAOTIC WORLD AND BRING PEACE TO ITS PEOPLE

ZHANG FEI, SHUT YOUR MOUTH!
BE QUIET AND LISTEN!

HEH!
THAT'S MORE THAN AN ASPIRATION. THAT'S AN AMBITION.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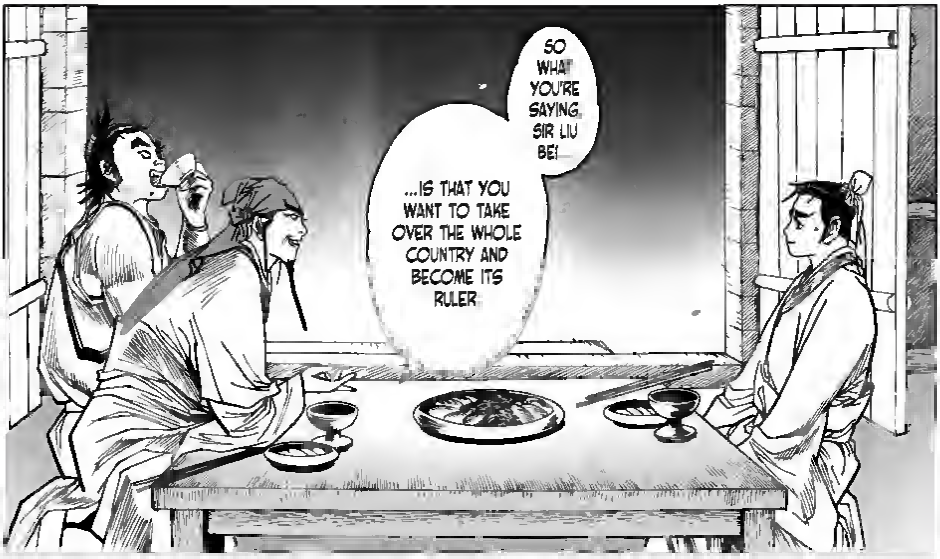

SO WHAT YOU'RE SAYING, SIR LIU BEI...
...IS THAT YOU WANT TO TAKE OVER THE WHOLE COUNTRY AND BECOME ITS RULER.

IN OTHER WORDS, AS THE EMPEROR.

MY WISH IS TO PUT THIS WORLD BACK IN ORDER AND RESHAPE THE HAN ROYAL FAMILY.
NOT QUITE.

PRECISELY

DISORDER IS SWEEPING EVERY CORNER OF THIS LAND AND THE CAUSE IS THE REVOLTS HAPPENING.
BUT THE WORLD ISN'T IN SUCH A MESS STRICTLY BECAUSE OF THE REVOLTS. THE EMPEROR IS FAILING TO DO HIS JOB IN RULING AND THAT IS CAUSING THE REVOLTS.
SO I WILL RESTORE THE ORDER OF THE PALACE AND ONCE AGAIN RECOVER THE GLORY OF THE HAN DYNASTY TO BRING PEACE TO THIS NATION.

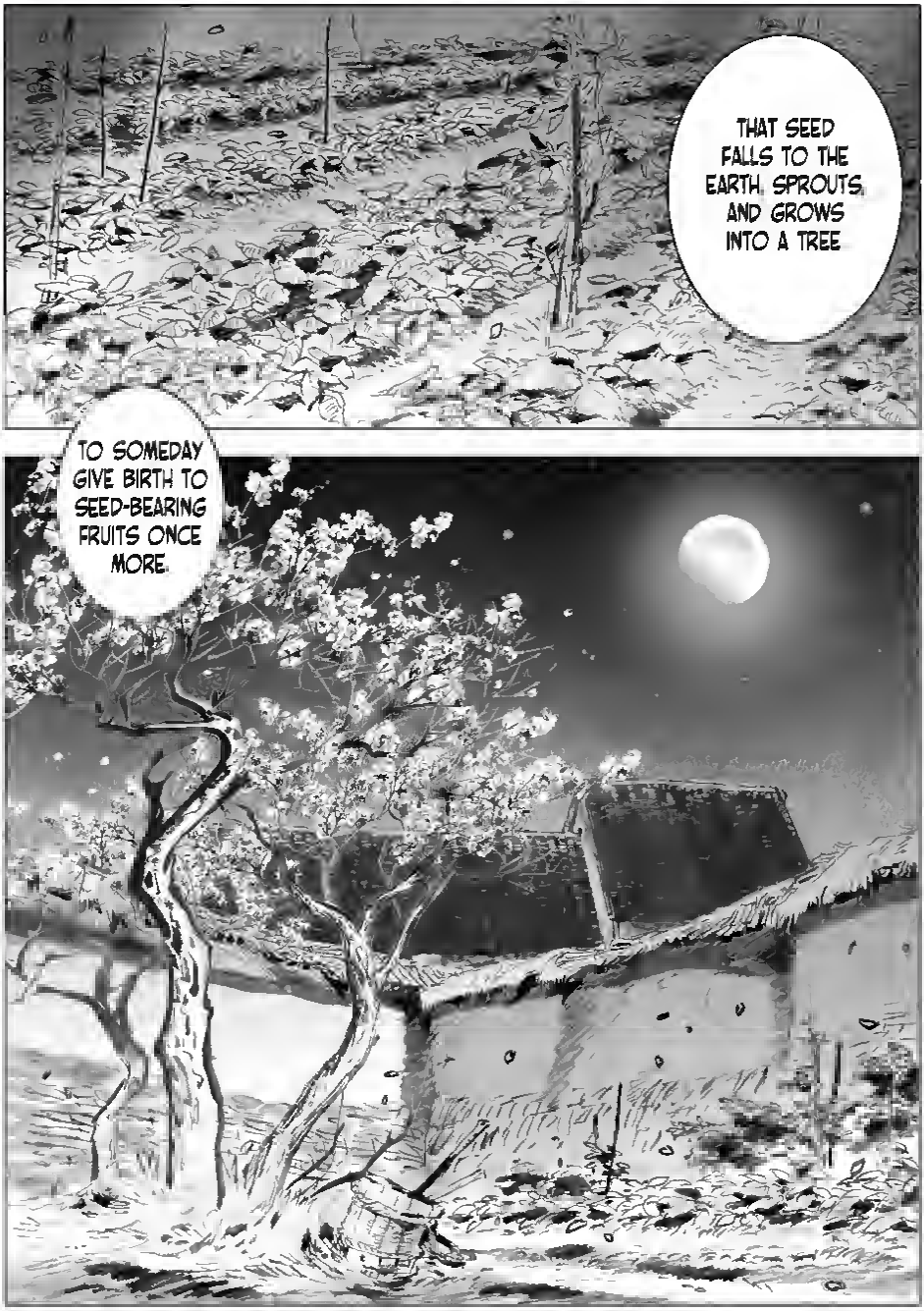
I SEE!
SO YOUR MOTIVATION FOR RUNNING FOR POLITICAL OFFICE DOES NOT STEM FROM SELF-INTEREST IN THE LEAST.
GRIP
NOT TO SOUND RUDE, BUT DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN ACCOMPLISH THAT IN THIS CLIMATE?
SIR LIU BEI.

THE YELLOW TURBAN FACTION ALONE IS SEVERAL HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF MEN, AND BANDITS HAVE INFESTED EVERY REGION. THEY'RE GAINING SUPREMACY OVER THE PROVINCES. ADD TO THAT THE MILITARY CLIQUE AND THEIR NUMBER REACHES WELL OVER ONE MILLION.

YOU ARE BUT ONE MAN.
AND, SIR LIU BEI.
GACK!
SPURT
WITH YOU TWO IT MAKES THREE.
NOT REALLY.

Y-YOU'RE INCLUDING US?!
BUT A MAN'S LIFE IS HAVING A DREAM AND WORKING TOWARD MAKING THAT DREAM A REALITY, IS IT NOT?
ALL I HAVE IS A DREAM NOTHING MORE

DO YOU KNOW THE ORIGIN OF THAT PHRASE?
THERE'S A PHRASE WE ALL USE CALLED "A REASON FOR LIVING".
.....
AND WHEN SOMETHING BEARS FRUIT LIKE THAT IT PLANTS A SEED.
THE "REASON" PART OF THE PHRASE REPRESENTS THE FRUITION OF AN IDEA.


THAT SEED FALLS TO THE EARTH, SPROUTS, AND GROWS INTO A TREE
TO SOMEDAY GIVE BIRTH TO SEED-BEARING FRUITS ONCE MORE.

THIS IS A LAW OF NATURE.
BUT THE ANCIENTS REALIZED THAT THE LAWS OF NATURE COULD BE ADAPTED BY THE HANDS OF MAN.

INSTEAD OF WAITING FOR THE SEED TO FALL AT RANDOM AND GROW INTO A TREE...
...THEY COLLECTED THE SEEDS BY HAND...
...PLANTED THEM...
...WATERED THEM...
...AND PROTECTED THEM FROM STORMS AND DROUGHT TO REAP THE FRUITS FOR THEMSELVES.

IN OTHER WORDS, THE ANCIENTS SAW THE ENORMOUS REWARDS OF THEIR EFFORTS AS THEIR REASON FOR LIVING.
IN THE SAME WAY, I TOO...
...WISH TO POSSESS A REASON FOR LIVING THAT WILL FOSTER MY DREAM IN THIS ONE LIFETIME I AM GRANTED.

EVEN IF THAT AMBITION IS LEAGUES ABOVE SOMEONE OF MY RANK, I WILL PUT MY LIFE ON THE LINE TO PURSUE IT.
IS IT SO WRONG TO DREAM?

SLAM

I COULDN'T AGREE MORE, SIR LIU BEI!
PLEASE MAKE US A PART OF THAT DREAM OF YOURS TOO!

ALL THIS TIME, WE'VE DEVOTED OURSELVES TO MILITARY AFFAIRS...
...AND THOUGH WE HAVE THE STRENGTH, WE'VE LACKED SOMETHING TO APPLY IT TO.
BUT I ONLY JUST NOW HAVE FIGURED IT OUT!

WHAT'RE YOU HOLDING BACK FOR, ZHANG FEI?!
YOU KNEEL BEFORE HIM TOO!
FROM NOW ON WE ARE SIR LIU BEI XUANDE'S SUBJECTS!

N...NOT SO FAST NOW.
I HAVEN'T MADE UP MY MIND ABOUT ANY OF THIS.

BUT...

CONSIDER HOW THE WORLD TREATS US!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, ZHANG FEI?!
WILD DOGS...
...DEEP DOWN, THEY SEE US AS NOTHING MORE THAN WILD DOGS!
PEOPLE FEAR OUR GREAT STRENGTH AND TAKE CARE NOT TO OFFEND US, BUT...

NO. WE HAVEN'T.
AS PROOF, EVER SINCE WE LEFT YOUZHOU, FOR ALL THE TIME THAT HAS PASSED, HAVE WE MADE ANY REAL FRIENDS?!
YOU'RE RIGHT.
THAT'S RIGHT.
ANY TIME I TRIED TO GET CLOSER TO SOMEONE, THEY RAN AWAY.

BUT...!
WHAT IF WE POSSESSED THE SAME WILLPOWER AS SIR LIU BEI? THE WAY HE THINKS ABOUT THIS COUNTRY, HE TRULY IS A MAN OF NOBLE IDEALS!
EVEN IF THINGS GO WELL, THEY WILL ONLY EVER SEE US AS HOODLUMS.

YOU'RE RIGHT.
YEAH...
ALL MY LIFE, I'D GET PISSED OFF ABOUT ANY LITTLE THING THAT DIDN'T MAKE SENSE TO ME AND WOULD GO BERSERK TO GET RID OF IT.
BUT NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, THAT WAS ONLY BECAUSE I DIDN'T HAVE SOME GOAL I HAD TO FULFILL. SOME PURPOSE.

CHUG
CHUG
HAAH!
THUD

ALL RIGHT, YOU'VE CONVINCED ME!
I, ZHANG FEI YIDE, WILL ALSO PLACE MY BETS ON THIS DREAM OF YOURS, SIR LIU BEI!
WHUMP

!
W-WAIT, PLEASE!
N-NO.
IT'S NOT THAT.
WHAT'RE YOU TELLING ME TO WAIT FOR, LORD LIU BEI?
YOU DON'T APPROVE OF ME BEING YOUR FOLLOWER?

I DIDN'T GIVE YOU THAT LONG-WINDED SPEECH TO MAKE YOU MY SUBJECTS OR FOLLOWERS.
THEN WHAT'D YOU TELL US ALL THAT FOR?!
KLACK
YOU BETTER NOT BE MAKING FOOLS OUT OF US!
NO.
THAT'S DEFINITELY NOT WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT.

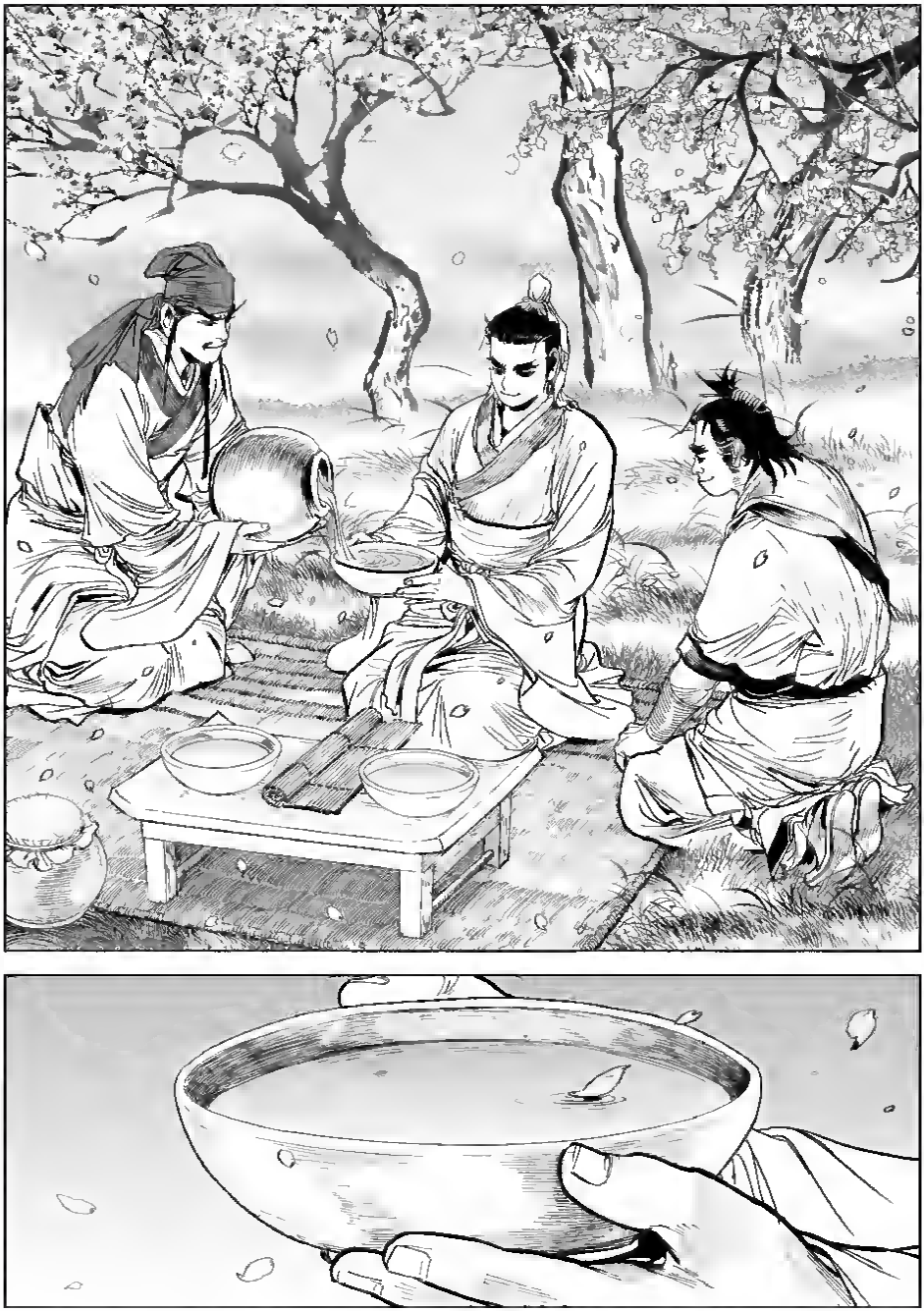
THE REASON I WANT TO INCLUDE YOU TWO...
...IS TO SHARE IN BOTH THE UPS AND DOWNS OF IT ALL AS MY COMRADES. NOT AS SUBJECTS OR FOLLOWERS BELOW ME.
I SEE. THEN HOW ABOUT AS BROTHERS?

I APOLOGIZE FOR BEING RUDE, BUT MIGHT I ASK HOW OLD YOU ARE, SIR LIU BEI?
BROTHERS?
...AM TWENTY-FOUR YEARS OLD.
I...
AND ZHANG FEI IS SEVENTEEN.
THEN I'M JUST ONE YEAR BELOW YOU. TWENTY-THREE.

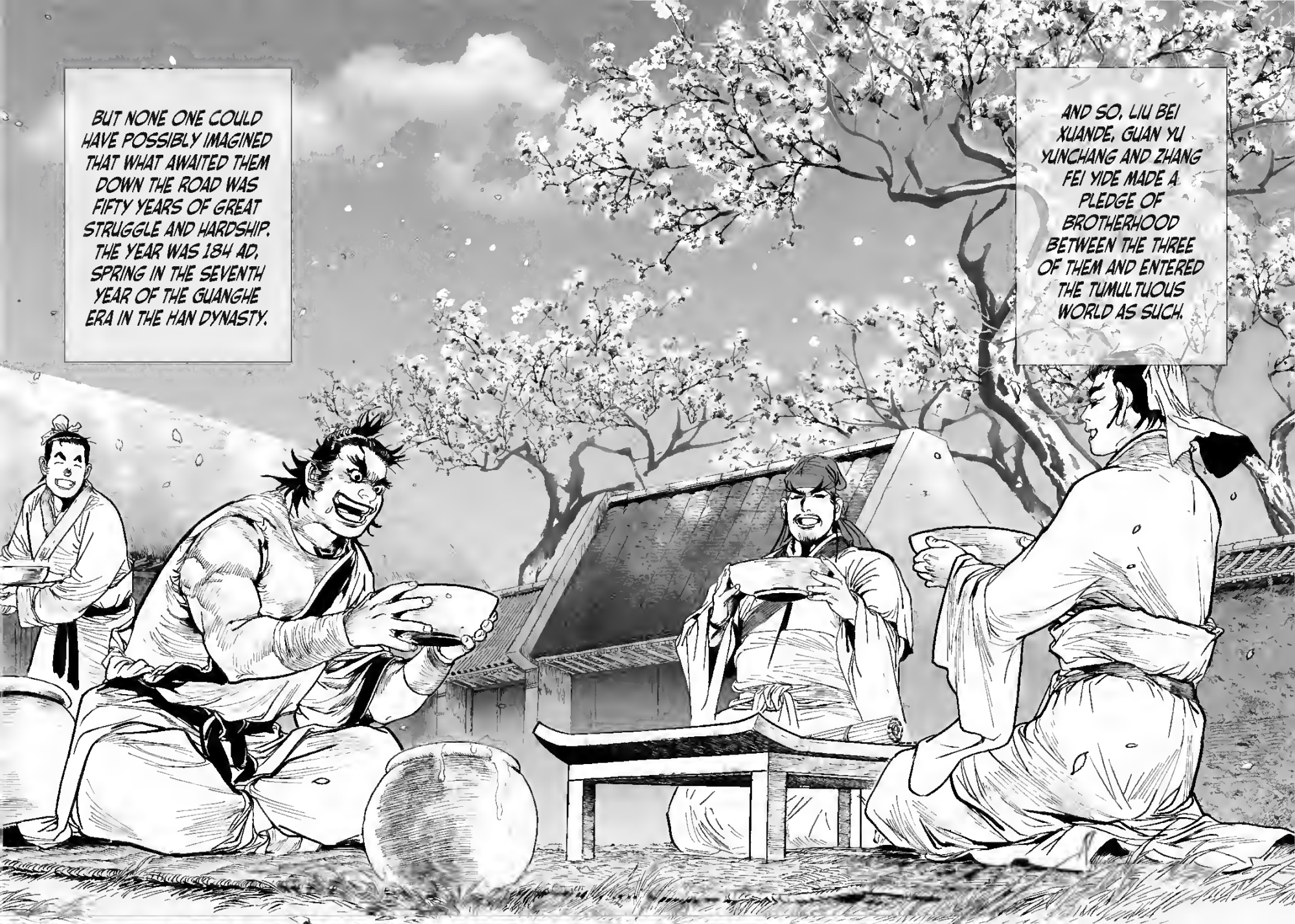
THEN LET US EXCHANGE BOWLS OF SAKE AS BROTHERS IN HONOR OF YOU, OUR ELDEST BROTHER.

.....

A SPLENDID IDEA.
AMONG US, THERE WILL BE NONE HIGHER NOR LOWER THAN THE OTHER. WE ARE BONDED BY THE SAME WILL.
LET US MOVE FOWARD ON THAT.



IN DOING SO, WE WILL BE BONDED AS BROTHERS FOR A THOUSAND YEARS PLEDGE, DESPITE OUR DIFFERENT AGES AND BACKGROUNDS.
NOW THEN, BROTHER. LET US EACH DRINK FROM OUR BOWLS AT THE SAME TIME.


BUT NONE ONE COULD HAVE POSSIBLY IMAGINED THAT WHAT AWAITED THEM DOWN THE ROAD WAS FIFTY YEARS OF GREAT STRUGGLE AND HARDSHIP. THE YEAR WAS 184 AD, SPRING IN THE SEVENTH YEAR OF THE GUANGHE ERA IN THE HAN DYNASTY.
AND SO, LIU BEI XUANDE, GUAN YU YUNCHANG AND ZHANG FEI YIDE MADE A PLEDGE OF BROTHERHOOD BETWEEN THE THREE OF THEM AND ENTERED THE TUMULTUOUS WORLD AS SUCH.

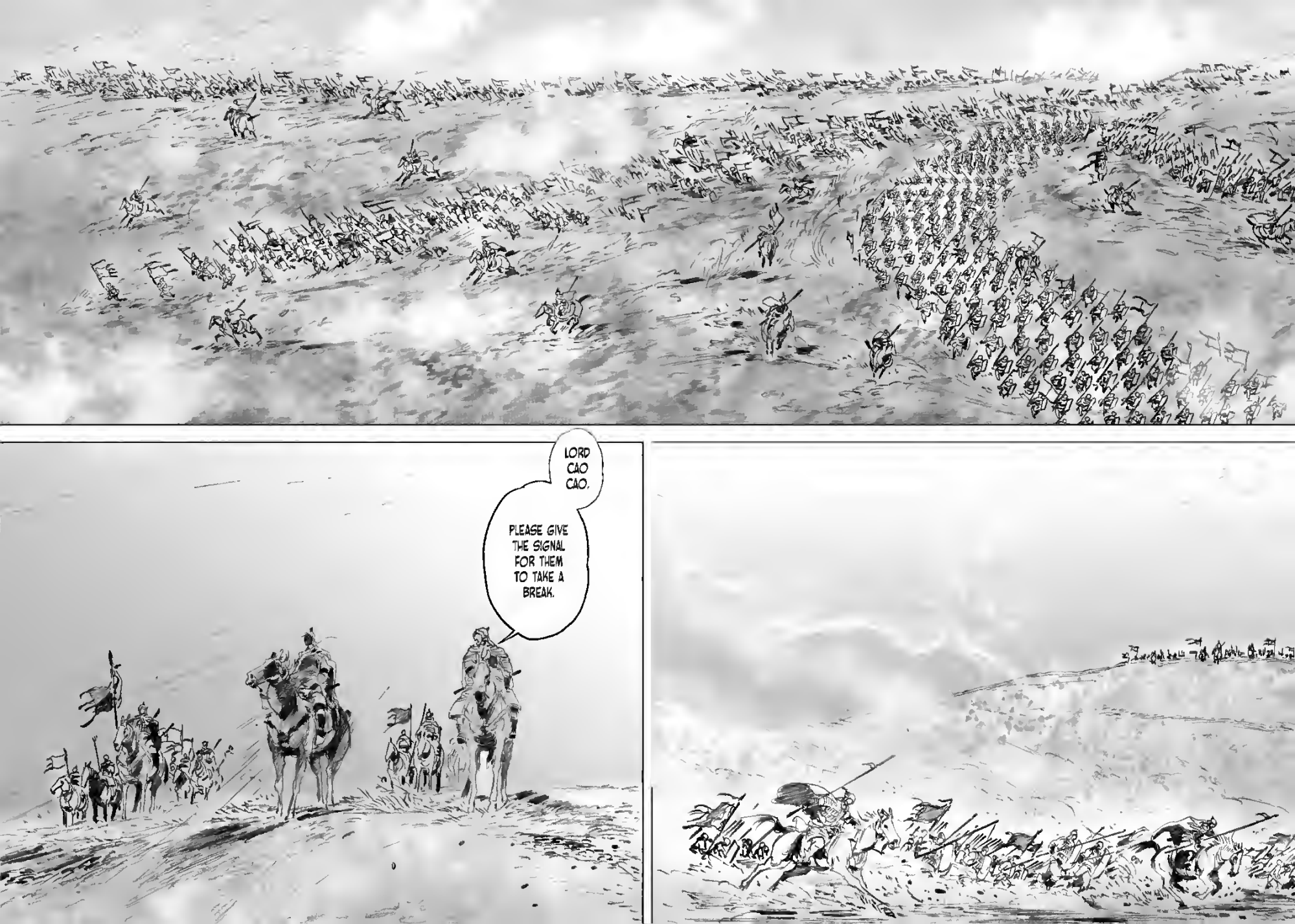
AROUND THE TIME THAT LIU BEI WAS EXCHANGING SAKE CUPS WITH GUAN YU AND ZHANG FEI, IN THE HAN CAPITAL OF LUOYANG, ANOTHER MAN OF VALOR WAS ENTERING THE STAGE.

DON'T STOP! FOLLOW YOUR ORDERS AND KEEP GOING!
THOSE WHO FALL BEHIND WILL BE EXECUTED!

YOU THERE!
UUH... OOF...

HUP!
HUFF!
...THEN YOU DON'T DESERVE TO CALL YOURSELVES IMPERIAL GUARDSMEN UNDER LORD CAO CAO MENGDE!
IF YOU CAN'T EVEN DO THIS SIMPLE TASK...
A MOMENT'S CARELESSNESS ON THE BATTLEFIELD MEANS THE END OF YOUR LIFE!

THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS TO THOSE WHO DON'T LISTEN!!
DULLARD!


LORD CAO CAO.
PLEASE GIVE THE SIGNAL FOR THEM TO TAKE A BREAK.

IF THE MEN KEEP UP THIS INTENSE TRAINING FOR TOO LONG, THEY WON'T BE MUCH USE SOON ENOUGH!

NO.
THEY WILL NOT STOP TRAINING UNTIL THEY'VE PERFECTED THE TWO-FLANKING WING FORMATION WITH THE MAIN FORCES CENTRALLY LOCATED AND THE REST OF THE MEN BRANCHING TO THE SIDES.

WILL YOU DEFY ME, XIAHOU YUAN?
B-BUT, SIR...
.....
N-NO, THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT...

THIS TRAINING WOULD MAKE EVEN THE GODS WEEP, BUT IT IS WHAT WILL GRANT ME SUPREMACY OVER THE COUNTRY!
I MAY BE NOTHING MORE THAN CAPTAIN OF THE CAVALRY*, BUT THE DECAY OF THE COURT CAUSED BY THE EUNUCHS AND RELATIVES HAS GIVEN ME, CAO CAO, THIS GRAND OPPORTUNITY! WHAT WILL GIVE ME THE MOST POWER NOW IS A STRONG ARMY!

*IMPERIAL CAPTAIN OF THE MOUNTED TROOPS

FOR THAT REASON...
I SEE. SO THAT IS YOUR PLAN.
COULDN'T YOU JUST BRIBE THE EUNUCHS AND BUY THE TITLE OF GENERAL? THE CAO FAMILY IS THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS IN ALL OF PEI COUNTY (PRESENT DAY XUZHOU). WITH YOUR FINANCIAL MUSCLE, IT SHOULD BE EASY.
...I MUST WIN FAME THROUGH THE THE RAID I MAKE IN TWO WEEKS FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF THE YELLOW TURBAN REBELLION AND MAKE MY NAME KNOWN THROUGHOUT THE LAND.
DON'T BE AN IDIOT.

PEOPLE FOLLOW A MAN WHO HAS REAL POWER!
NOBODY WOULD FOLLOW A MAN WHO ONLY WON HIS TITLE THROUGH MONEY!
.....
EVEN IF THAT MEDICINE WAS A HOAX, PEOPLE BELIEVED IN HIS POWER TO PERFORM MIRACLES AND NOW FLOCK TO HIM IN DROVES!
JUST LOOK AT THE LEADER OF THE YELLOW TURBANS, ZHANG JUE. HE WAS A THIRD-RATE SORCERER FROM JULU COUNTY, BUT WHEN SICKNESS BROKE OUT LAST YEAR, HE APPLIED THE SECRET MEDICINE OF ALCHEMY AND CURED IT.

I...I APOLOGIZE FOR MY TEMPORARY LAPSE IN JUDGEMENT, MY LORD.
HAAAAH!

WHY IS HE TAKING A NAP NOW?
HOW CAN HE TAKE A BREAK WHILE HIS MEN ARE STILL OUT THERE DRILLING?!

HMPH!

MESSENGER!
TELL THE COMMANDER OF THE RIGHT FLANK THAT HIS MEN ARE TOO SLOW!
AND IF HE CANNOT FOLLOW SUCH SIMPLE ORDERS THAN I'LL DEMOTE HIM TO A COMMON SOLDIER!

YES, SIR!

MEANWHILE, A NEW DEVELOPMENT WAS UNFOLDING FOR LIU BEI AND HIS BROTHERS.

OOH! THIS IS A FINE LANCE YOU'VE CRAFTED!
GRIP

YES.
IT IS FORGED FROM THREE LAYERS OF STEEL SO IT SHOULD BE UNPARALLELED IN A BATTLE.
BECAUSE THE CENTER OF BALANCE IS AT THE LANCE'S FAR END, IT IS EASY TO WIELD.

SWOOSH
A SUPERB PIECE OF CRAFTSMANSHIP.
ZIGH
HA HA HA HA HA! I'M ITCHING TO SEE IT IN ACTION!

I CAN'T WAIT TO USE IT AND SHOW THE WHOLE WORLD WHO ZHANG FEI REALLY IS!
MEN.
IT SEEMS THE TIME HAS COME.
BROTHER!

WHERE DID YOU GET THAT ARMOR?!

SO I WAS THINKING OF JOINING THE ANTI-REBELLION ARMY LED BY GENERAL HUANGFU SONG AS A VOLUNTEER SOLDIER.
THE PALACE HAS ANNOUNCED IT WILL BE DISPATCHING AN ARMY TO DEAL WITH THE YELLOW TURBANS.

WHEN DO WE LEAVE, BROTHER?
SO THE TIME IS FINALLY NOW!

EVERYTHING IS ALL READY. I HAVE A HUNDRED MEN WHO SYMPATHIZE WITH OUR CAUSE.
WE CAN DEPART ANY TIME.
!

YEL
YELLOW
THE FIRMAMENT HAS PERISHED, THE YELLOW SKY WILL SOON RISE; IN THIS YEAR OF JIAZI, LET THERE BE PROSPERITY IN THE WORLD!
AND SO THE UPRISING OF THE YELLOW TURBANS THAT BLANKETED THE ENTIRE NATION...
YEL
YELLOW

...MADE ITS WAY FROM THE CAPITAL CITY OF LUOYANG TO YINGCHUAN, LITTERING THEIR 100 LI (APP. 40 KM) PATH WITH PLUNDERING AND ARSON.

IT WAS FINALLY AT THIS POINT THAT THE COURT MADE UP THEIR MIND TO ORDER GENERALS HUANGFU SONG AND ZHU JUN TO SUBJUGATE THE UPRISING.
THE COURT KEEPS AFTER ME TO HURRY UP AND BRING THEM ZHANG JUE'S HEAD AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
IN ANY CASE.

AT THIS RATE, OUR BEST BET IS TO CLAIM VICTORY WITH A SINGLE BLOW IN THE EARY STAGE OF THE WAR
CAPTAIN.
TO BE HONEST, WE HAVEN'T THE TIME TO SET UP A STRATEGY.
WHAT KIND OF STRATEGY WOULD THAT CALL FOR?
THOSE EUNUCHS ARE MAKING QUITE A RACKET UNDER THE GUISE OF ORDERS FROM THE EMPEROR. IF WE FAIL, IT WILL BE WE WHO LOSE OUR HEADS!

AND LAST I CHECKED, WE ARE NOT FIGHTING FOR THE SAKE OF THE EUNUCHS.

DON'T KID ME.
WE HAVE NO CHOICE.
THE ONES IN CONTROL OF THE HAN PALACE RIGHT NOW ARE THE EUNUCHS. AT LEAST IF WE ARE SUCCESSFUL, WE WILL ALL GET THE PROMOTIONS WE WANT.

.....
I FIGHT FOR THE HAN DYNASTY AND ITS PEOPLE, BUT I HAVE NO INTENTION OF WORKING FOR SOME CORRUPT EUNUCHS.
I KNOW, CAPTAIN OF THE CAVALRY.
FINE.
I UNDERSTAND ALL TOO WELL HOW YOU FEEL, BUT...
...PLEASE JUST THINK OF IT AS FIGHTING FOR THE YOUNG EMPEROR.

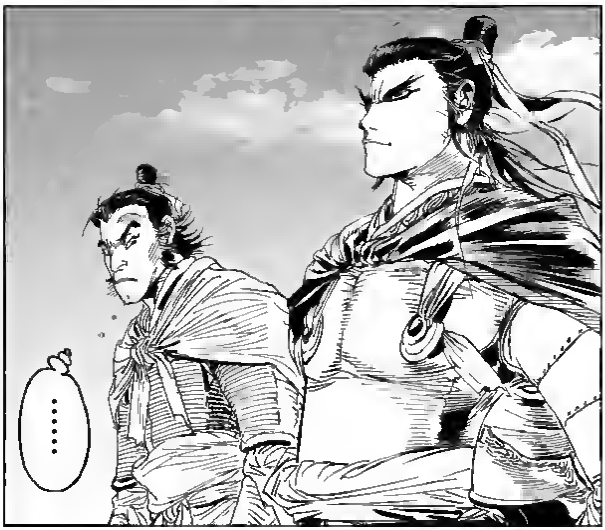
MYSELF AND GENERAL ZHU WILL WATCH FOR AN OPENING TO ATTACK FROM THE SIDES. THAT OUGHT TO UPSET THE ENEMY'S ORDER SUFFICIENTLY.
IN THAT CASE, THE IMPERIAL COMMANDER WILL CONVERGE ON THE ENEMY FROM THE FRONT WITH THE CONCENTRATED FORCES!

THANK YOU, CAPTAIN OF THE CAVALRY.
LET US TAKE THAT COURSE OF ACTION!

A MAN WHO HAS COME FROM YOUR HOMETOWN IN PEI COUNTY IS WAITING FOR YOU IN YOUR TENT.
LORD CAO CAO.
MY HOME-TOWN?
WHAT IS HIS NAME?
HE DIDN'T GIVE ME ONE, SAYING YOU WOULD KNOW HIM WHEN YOU SAW HIM

I SEE...

VERY WELL.
I'LL SEE WHAT HE HAS TO SAY.


.....

NO, I'LL BE FINE.
ARE YOU SURE YOU'LL BE ALL RIGHT? SHALL I ACCOMPANY YOU?

Y-YES, SIR.

YOU START PREPARING FOR THE ATTACK.
THE BATTLE WILL START AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE.

WHAT HAVE YOU COME FOR?
NOW THEN, I'M READY TO LISTEN.

...I CAME TO SEE ABOUT BUYING A CERTAIN SECRET OF YOURS, LORD CAO CAO.
THE TRUTH IS...
YES!
IT CONCERNS YOUR FATHER!
A SECRET OF MINE?

LORD SONG HELD THE RANK OF GRAND COMMANDANT IN THE HAN ARMY. EVEN IN PEI COUNTY, HE IS A PROMINENT FINANCIAL CLIQUE.
BUT HIS DESCENDENT IS SQUANDERING THAT FINANCIAL POWER...

INDEED.
THAT'S NO SECRET.

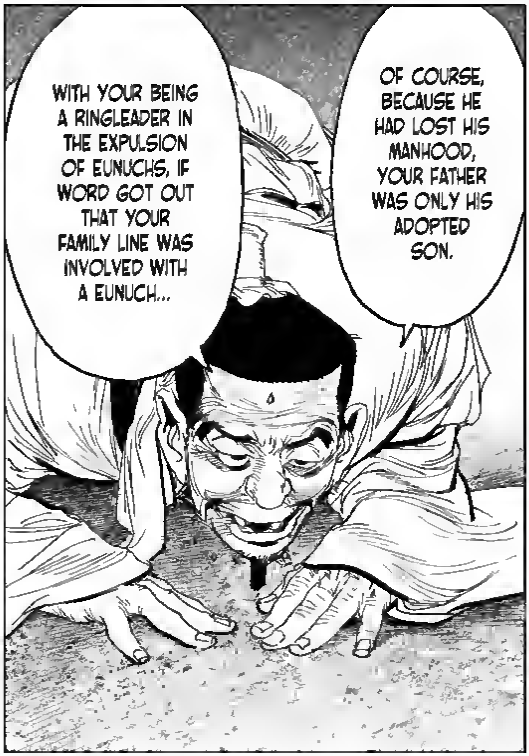
HEH HEH HEH.
BUT...
YOUR GRANDFATHER, LORD TENG, IS WHERE THE REAL PROBLEM LIES.
STOP BEATING AROUND THE BUSH AND GET TO THE POINT!

IF I TELL YOU, YOU MUST PAY ME A HUNDRED THOUSAND SEN IN HUSH MONEY.
WHAT'S THE PROBLEM WITH MY GRAND-FATHER?
I'LL PAY YOU, NOW OUT WITH IT.
FINE.

HEH HEH HEH HEH. GOOD, THEN HERE GOES.
LORD CAO CAO, YOUR GRANDFATHER WAS A EUNUCH OF THE PALACE.

...WHAT WOULD BECOME OF THE REPUTATION YOU WORKED SO HARD TO CREATE FOR YOURSELF?

IT WOULD BE COMPLETELY RUINED, I IMAGINE.


WITH YOUR BEING A RINGLEADER IN THE EXPULSION OF EUNUCHS, IF WORD GOT OUT THAT YOUR FAMILY LINE WAS INVOLVED WITH A EUNUCH...
OF COURSE, BECAUSE HE HAD LOST HIS MANHOOD, YOUR FATHER WAS ONLY HIS ADOPTED SON.

.....
DOESN'T THAT MAKE THE HUNDRED THOUSAND SEN SEEM A LITTLE INADEQUATE FOR WHAT I'D BE SAVING YOU?
YOU'RE PROBABLY RIGHT.
YOU'RE RIGHT.
CONSIDERING THE WAVE OF SCANDAL THAT WOULD DELUGE ME, A HUNDRED THOUSAND SEN IS RATHER CHEAP.
BUT...

Y-YOU DON'T MEAN...
THERE IS A WAY TO CUT THE PRICE DOWN EVEN MORE.
AND THAT IS...

...BY CUTTING OFF YOUR HEAD!
SLISH

.....
IS EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT, LORD CAO CAO?!
ドタドタ
IT'S NOTHING!
THIS MAN WAS INSOLENT AND SO I SLAID HIM.
NOW, SOUND THE GONG! BEAT THE DRUMS! WE MARCH INTO BATTLE NOW!

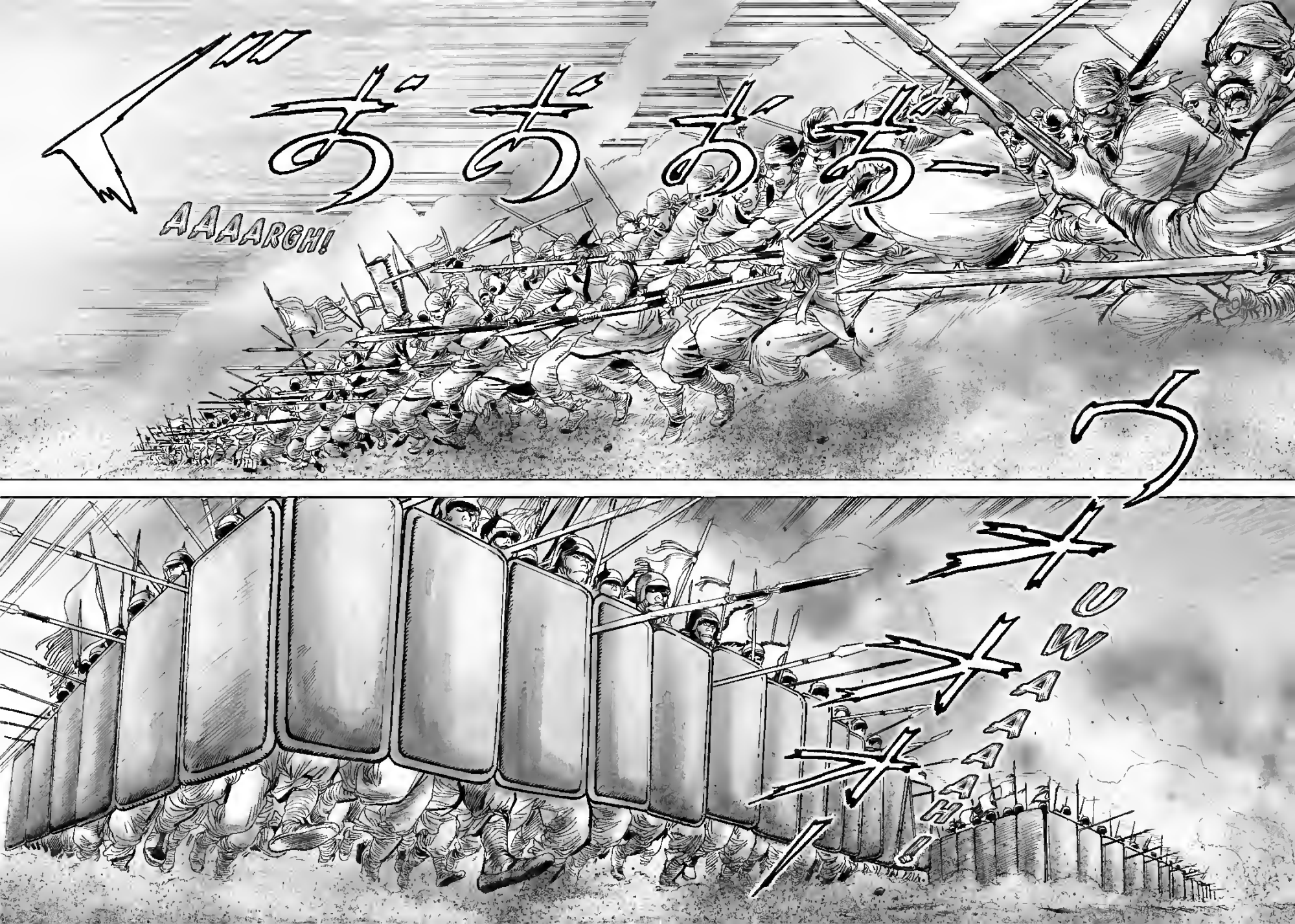
WOOOO
BABOOOO
BABOOO
前進

FOR A DISORDERLY MOB, THEY'RE AN IMPRESSIVE SIGHT.
RELIGION.
JUST WHAT IS IT THAT COMPELS THEM FORWARD?
OUR HAN ARMY IS EQUIPPED WITH PROFESSIONAL SOLDIERS ARMED WITH SEVERAL TIMES THE WEAPONS AND TRAINING AS THEM, AND YET THEY ADVANCE WITHOUT THE SLIGHTEST FEAR

YES.
ARE THE TEACHINGS OF THE WAY OF SUPREME PEACE SO GUIDING?
GO TO HELL FOR RETREATING?!
IF THEY RETREAT, THEY GO TO HELL. SO THEIR TEACHINGS GO.
IF THEY DIE IN THE NAME OF THEIR FAITH, THEY GO TO HEAVEN.

BUT!
I DON'T BELIEVE IN THAT!
I, CAO CAO MENGDE JILI, BELIEVE IN MY POWER AND MINE ALONE!

ウオオオオ――ッ
UWAAAAH!
WAAAH!

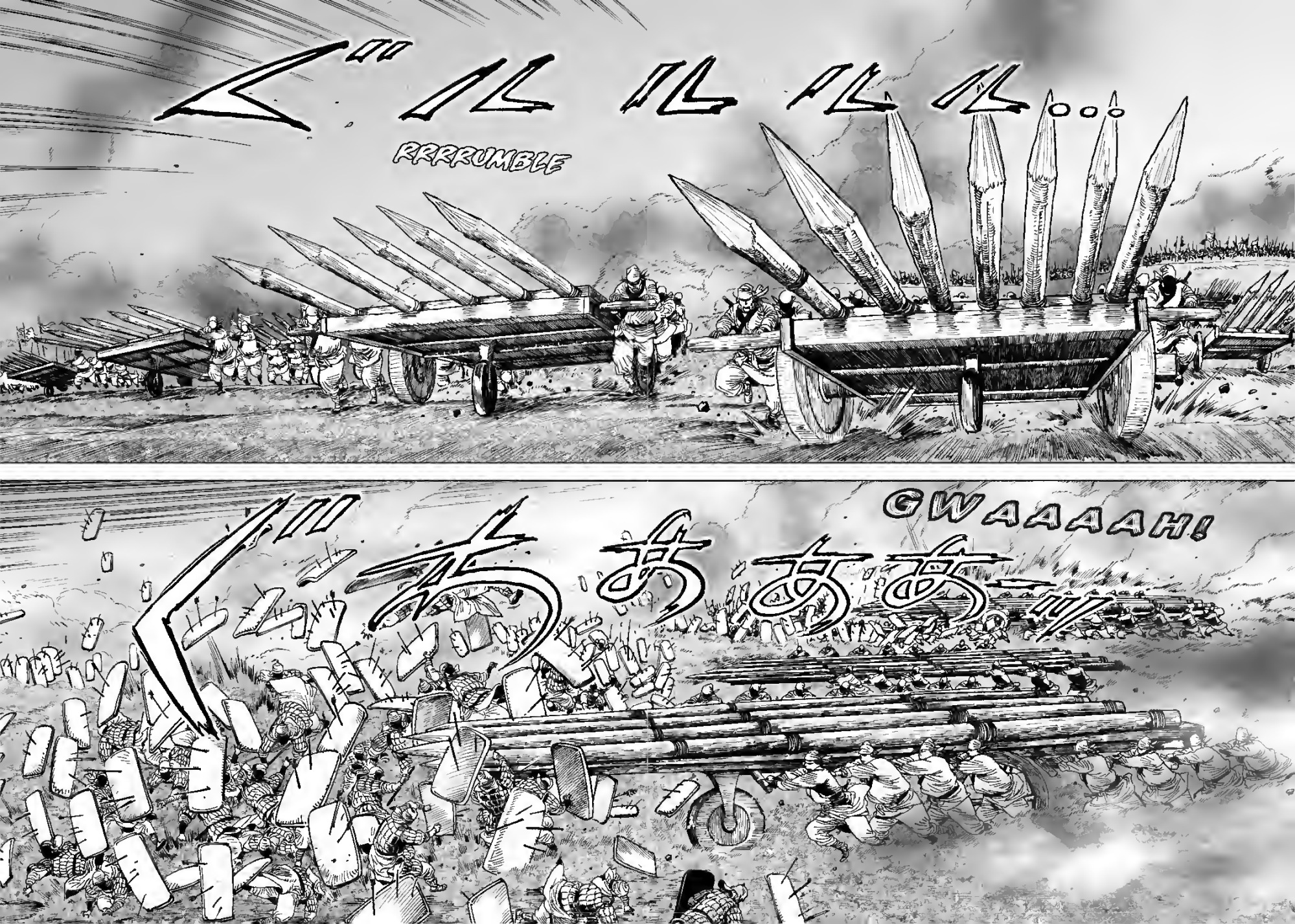

AAAARGH!

ESH
ESH
ESH
BOWMEN, FIRE!!
ZIP
ZIP

ヒュー
ヒュー
ヒュー

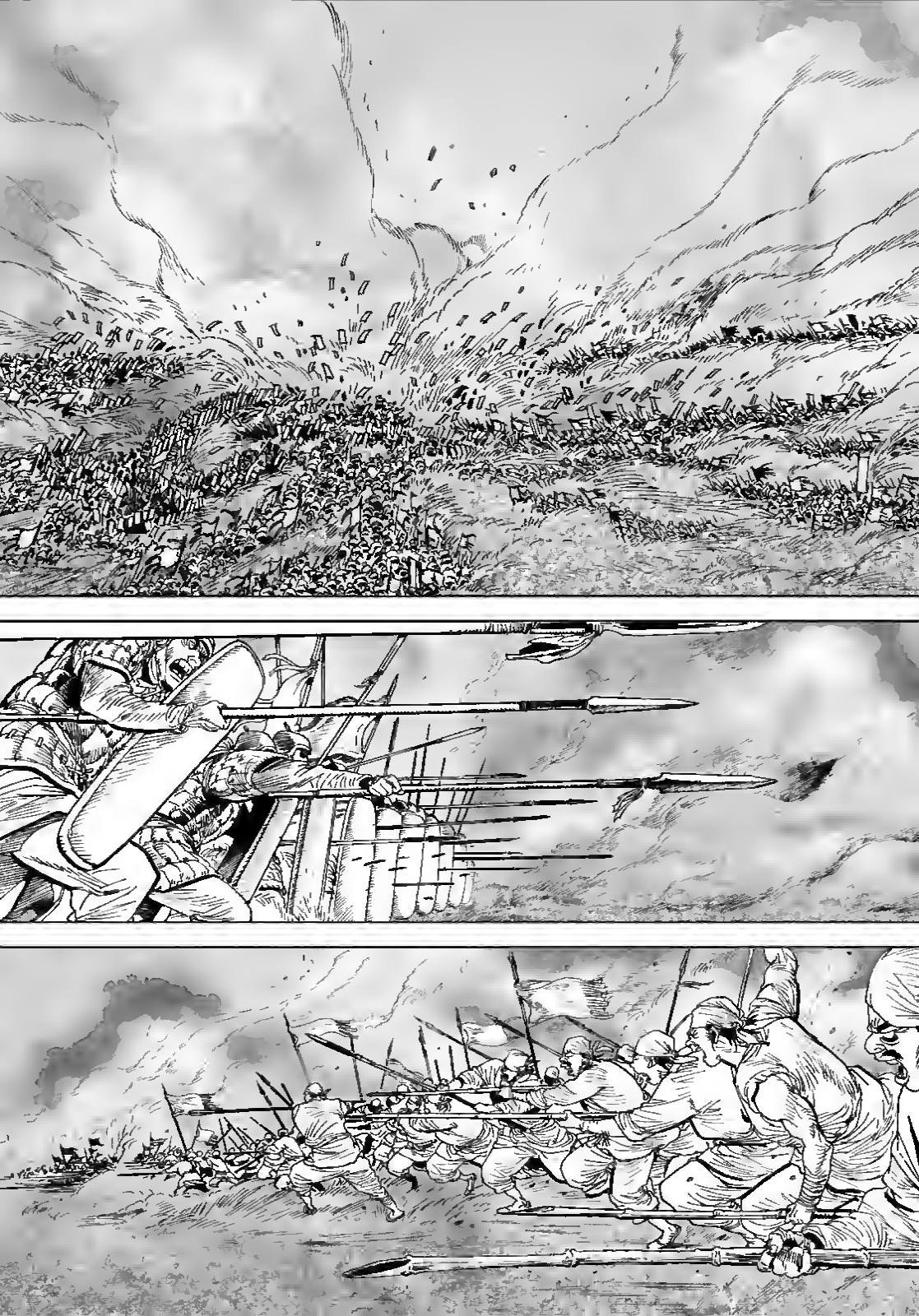
THUNK
THUNK
THUNK
THUNK
THUNK
THUNK
THUNK
THUNK
THUNK

UNLEASH THE SPEAR CARTS!
THE SPEARS!


RRRRUMBLE
GWAAAAH!

GO, MEN! ATTACK!
NOW!!

THE FIRMAMENT HAS PERISHED!
OOOOOH!
WAAH!
THE YELLOW SKY WILL SOON RISE!



……
……

HOW DARE YOU KILL OUR GREAT TEACHER!!

OUR ARMY'S MAIN FORCES HAVE STARTED TO CRUMBLE.
ARE YOU SURE WE SHOULDN'T ATTACK?!
.....

IF THIS KEEPS UP, OUR FORCES WILL BE CRUSHED!
B-BUT...
NOT YET.
FOR NOW, WE SIT TIGHT AND WAIT.
THIS IS ALL FOR A DRAMATIC ENTRANCE?
I KNOW THAT, BUT NOT YET.
WE'RE GOING TO WAIT JUST A LITTLE LONGER TO MAKE MY ENTRANCE ALL THE MORE DRAMATIC.

THAT'S RIGHT!
TO STEP ONTO THE PLATFORM AMID A STORM OF APPLAUSE, YOU NEED AN ENTRANCE THAT WILL BE LEGENDARY!

.....
XIAHOU YUAN.
YOU MAY NOT UNDERSTAND THIS, BUT IN ORDER TO CONQUER A COUNTRY, FIRST YOU MUST MAKE YOUR NAME KNOWN FAR AND WIDE.

WHAT?!
BUT THERE ARE MEN BREAKING OFF FROM GENERAL ZHU JUN'S BRIGADE!
I'M SORRY TO INTERRUPT, LORD CAO CAO!

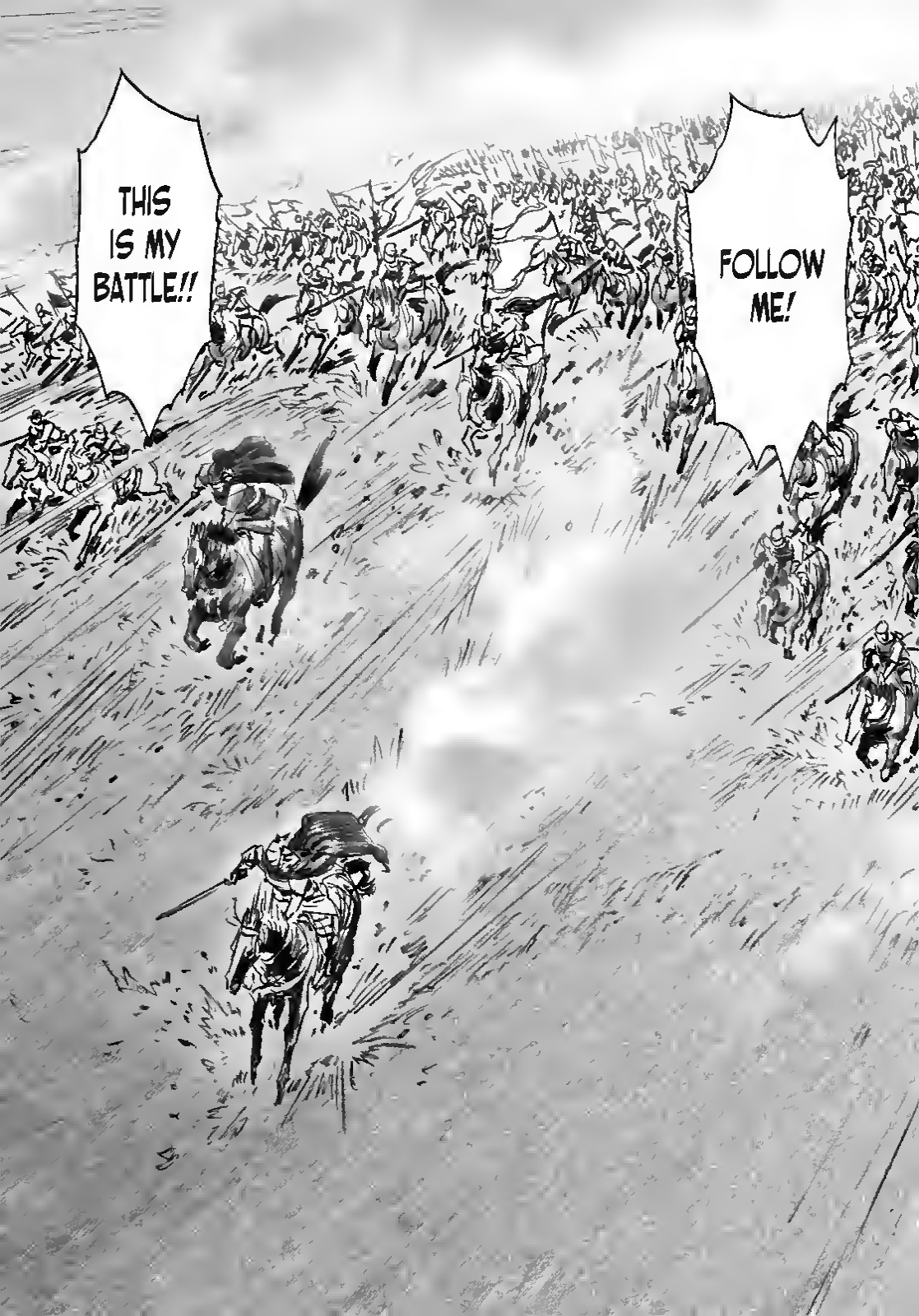
THUD THUD THUD THUD THUD THUD THUD
ドドドドドドドド…
I DON'T KNOW!
BUT THEY'RE STRONG. THEY BROKE THROUGH THE TROOPS IN NO TIME AT ALL!
DON'T THEY KNOW THEIR PLACE?!
WHO?! WHO ARE THEY?!

GALLOP
GALLOP
GALLOP

THUD
ゲ
THUD
ゲゲ
THUD
ゲゲゲ
オ
OOOOOH!
オオオオ!!!

THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD

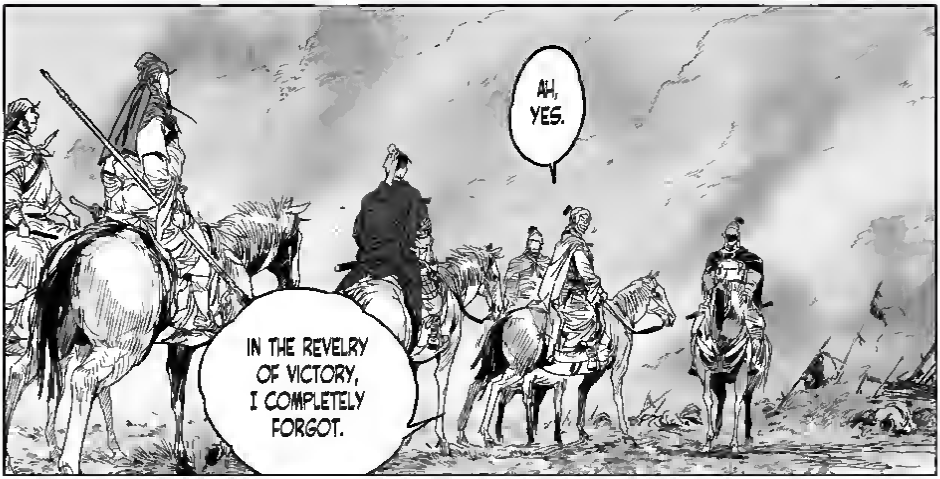
DAMN IT!
I'M NOT ABOUT TO LET SOME LOWLY PRIVATES STEAL THE SHOW!


THIS IS MY BATTLE!!
FOLLOW ME!

XIAHOU YUAN MIAOCAI IS HERE!!
FOLLOWER OF CAO CAO MINGDE!

THAT'S OUR ARMY'S RENOWNED IMPERIAL CAVALRY FOR YOU!
THAT WAS AN IMPRESSIVE MOVE BACK THERE!
CAO CAO!
I WAS JUST ABOUT TO HUNT DOWN AND KILL ANY REMAINING ENEMY.
I THINK WE'VE DONE WELL TO OBLITERATE THE YELLOW TURBAN INSURGENTS.
THANK YOU.

I SENT A MESSENGER TO THE CITY TO PROCLAIM THE CAPTAIN OF THE CAVALRY'S ACTIONS, SO YOU SHOULD BE REWARDED WITH A PRIZE AND A PROMOTION SOON ENOUGH
GOOD. VERY GOOD.
BY THE WAY, WHO ARE THOSE MEN BEHIND YOU, GENERAL?
!
THAT IS TOO GREAT AN HONOR FOR ME.


AH, YES.
IN THE REVELRY OF VICTORY, I COMPLETELY FORGOT.

THESE ARE VOLUNTEER SOLDIERS FROM ZHUO COUNTY.

A PLEASURE MEETING YOU.
MY NAME IS LIU BEI XUANDE.
THERE IS SUCH A THING AS RULES ON THE BATTLEFIELD.
I WILL ASK THAT IN THE FUTURE YOU DON'T STEAL THE MARCH ON THE ARMY.

W-WHAT DID YOU SAY?!
YOU ASSHOLE!!
ZHANG FEI!

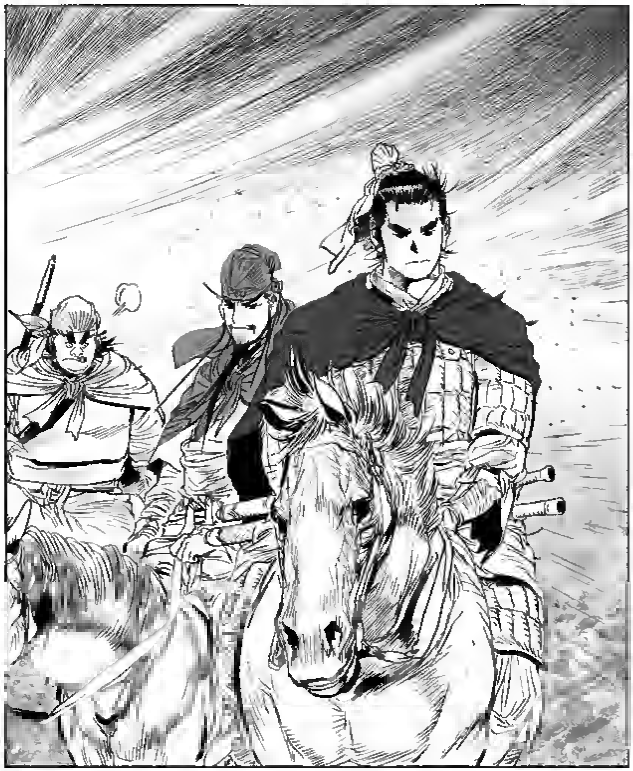
.....
.....
.....
MY APOLOGIES. I WILL REMEMBER THAT NEXT TIME.
Y.. YOU'RE RIGHT.

SO LONG AS YOU UNDERSTAND THE REPURCUSSIONS OF YOUR ACTIONS.
WHAT I'M TRYING TO TELL YOU IS THAT IF YOU FAIL TO FOLLOW ORDERS AND DISRUPT THE RULES OF WAR, THE SITUATION CAN GO SOUTH VERY QUICKLY AND CAUSE IRREVOCABLE DAMAGE!

IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME.
GENERAL!
I MUST GO AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE SERVICE OF MY MEN NOW.

CAPTAIN!
I'LL SEE YOU AT TONIGHT'S BANQUET. WE'LL DRINK THE NIGHT AWAY!

WHAT'S HIS PROBLEM ?!



THAT BASTARD!
WHO'S HE THINK HE IS?!
HOW DARE HE INSULT OUR ACTIONS!
LORD LIU BEI!
.....

CAO CAO MENGDE, WAS IT?
I'LL REMEMBER HIM!

THUD
ドドドド
THUD
THUD
CURSES!
……
I MUST SAY!
IF THE HAN DYNASTY IS TAKING ON HOOLIGANS LIKE THEM TO FIGHT THEIR WARS, THEN WE'RE DONE FOR.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN...
IS THAT HOW YOU SEE THOSE MEN?
I CAN'T SPEAK ABOUT THE OTHERS, BUT...
...THAT MAN WHO CALLED HIMSELF LIU BEI AND THE TWO BRAVE MEN WITH HIM...

THOSE THREE ARE NO ORDINARY MEN.
PARTICULARLY LIU BEI. THAT LIGHT IN HIS EYES IS LIKE THAT IN MY OWN.

THEN THAT MAN IS ALSO HOPING TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS TURMOIL TO GAIN CONTROL OVER THE COUNTRY!
HAAH!

CAO CAO WAS BORN IN THE FOUNDING YEAR OF THE YONGSHOU ERA (155 AD) IN CENTRAL PEI COUNTY IN CHINA'S PLAINS. NOW HE WAS THIRTY YEARS OLD. SIX YEARS OLDER THAN LIU BEI.

AFTER THIS, CAO CAO WOULD BUTT HEADS ON MANY FRONTS WITH LIU BEI WHO WAS TRYING TO LEAD A LIFE THAT STUCK TO HIS CONVICTIONS OF "FAITH". AND THEN ONE MORE WOULD ENTER THE SCENE...
WHEN HE WAS YOUNG IT IS SAID THAT A PHYSIOGNOMIST FROM HENAN NAMED XU SHAO EVALUATED HIM AND PROCLAIMED, "YOU WILL BE A CAPABLE MINISTER IN PEACEFUL TIMES AND AN UNSCRUPULOUS HERO IN CHAOTIC TIMES".

IF YOU'RE GOING INTO BATTLE, YOU WON'T GET VERY FAR IN THE LITTLE YOU'RE WEARING!
HEY, WARRIOR. CARE TO BUY SOME ARMOR?
THE BATTLE ISN'T FOUGHT WITH GEAR.
DON'T WORRY.

THEN HOW IS IT FOUGHT, PRAY TELL?
THEN YOU MEAN TO SAY YOU WITHSTAND ARROWS ON GUTS ALONE?
HA HA HA HA!
YOU WANNA KNOW? IT'S FOUGHT WITH YOUR GUTS!

A HA HA HA! GUTS ALONE WON'T SEND THOSE ARROWS BOUNCING BACK.
OH! YEAH, I GUESS YOU'VE GOT A POINT!
YOU HAVE TO ADMIT WE LOOK PRETTY SHABBY IN WHAT WE'RE WEARING NOW.
THIS IS SUCH A GOOD OPPORTUNITY, WHY DON'T WE GATHER EQUIPMENT HERE?

WE'RE FINE AS WE ARE, CHENG PU DEMOU.
IF WE RUSH TO THE ANTI-REBELLION ARMY IN THIS, THEY'LL BE OVERJOYED AT THIS VOLUNTEER ARMY WHO HAS GONE THROUGH SO MUCH TROUBLE TO REACH THEM.
THEN WE'LL BE GIVEN A GOOD POSITION IN THE FIGHT AND BE ABLE TO REALLY DISTINGUISH OURSELVES!

I SEE NOW, THAT'S A GOOD WAY TO LOOK AT IT!

NOW QUIT WASTING MY TIME AND LET'S HURRY ON AHEAD!

YES, SIR!
IF WE DON'T HURRY, WE'LL MISS THE WHOLE FIGHT!
THE HAN ARMY'S STRAIGHT AHEAD. YOU HEARD HOW THEY THRASHED THE YELLOW TURBAN REBELS.

HIS NAME WAS SUN JIAN WENTAI.
ONE OF THE GREATEST HEROES OF THE THREE KINGDOMS HAILED FROM THE FUCHUN COUNTY OF THE WU COMMANDERY (PRESENT DAY FUYANG, ZHEJIANG).
RECORDS OF THE THREE KINGDOMS
THE END/Continues in next volume

BAMBOO COMICS

三国志

英雄の登場 一

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